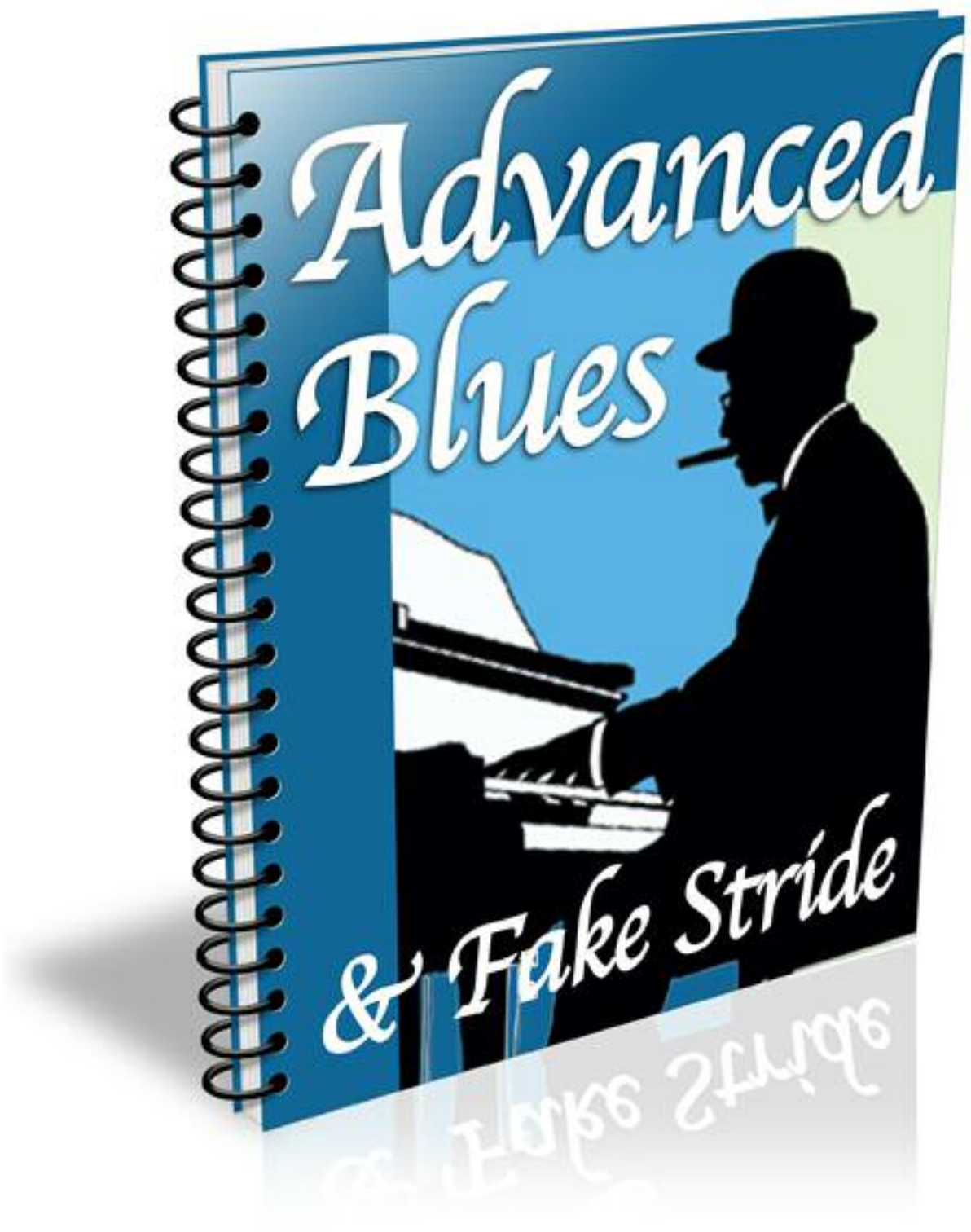

Advanced
Blues
& Fake Stride

THE PIANOFORALL INSTANT TRANSPOSER

At some stage in your playing, you will want to change a song to a different ‘key’ so that it fits your vocal range.

There is an easy way to do this (but it’s not quite so easy to explain on paper so bear with me).

Let’s say you were playing a blues in the key of C and your chords were C, F, G

But you wanted to start with the chord of E instead of C because you could sing more easily over the E chord.

So if your C changes to an E what do the other chords - F and G change to.

The easy way to do it is to move ALL the chords the EXACT same number of KEYS up or down. You can use the ROOT note of each chord to do this

It takes 5 notes to get from C to E (including C, E and all keys in between)
So to change the chords of F and G you need to go up 5 notes in the same way.

5 notes up from F is A
5 notes up from G is B

So your three new chords will be E - A - B
which are all exactly 5 notes away from C - F - G

Should one of the chords be a minor or a diminished you simply
ADD that distinction to the new chord.
ie If the original chords had been C - Fm and G diminished
The new chords would be E - Am and B diminished

Try it now but use the INSTANT TRANSPOSER on the next page.
It saves you the bother of having to count your way up the keys

You simply count how far away your FIRST chord is and then you will know which column all the OTHER chords are going to be in because they all have to be that exact number of keys away from the original chords (which will be in the white column).

When you try it a few times you will see how simple it is.

INSTANT TRANSPOSER

Number of notes from original note

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
C	Db	D	Eb	E	F	F#	G	Ab	A	Bb	B
Db	D	Eb	E	F	F#	G	Ab	A	Bb	B	C
D	Eb	E	F	F#	G	Ab	A	Bb	B	C	Db
Eb	E	F	F#	G	Ab	A	Bb	B	C	Db	D
E	F	F#	G	Ab	A	Bb	B	C	Db	D	Eb
F	F#	G	Ab	A	Bb	B	C	Db	D	Eb	E
F#	G	Ab	A	Bb	B	C	Db	D	Eb	E	F
G	Ab	A	Bb	B	C	Db	D	Eb	E	F	F#
Ab	A	Bb	B	C	Db	D	Eb	E	F	F#	G
A	Bb	B	C	Db	D	Eb	E	F	F#	G	Ab
Bb	B	C	Db	D	Eb	E	F	F#	G	Ab	A
B	C	Db	D	Eb	E	F	F#	G	Ab	A	Bb

If your original chord is a minor or a diminished or a seventh etc add this on to the NEW chord you are transposing to.

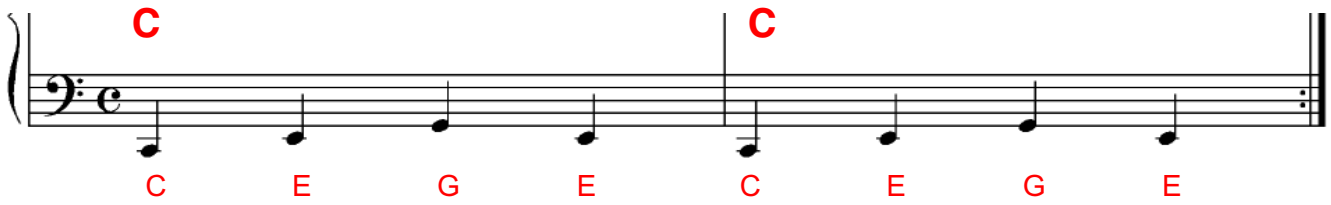
ie. If the original chord is G diminished and you are transposing to column 8
Your new chord would be Eb diminished

ADVANCED BLUES

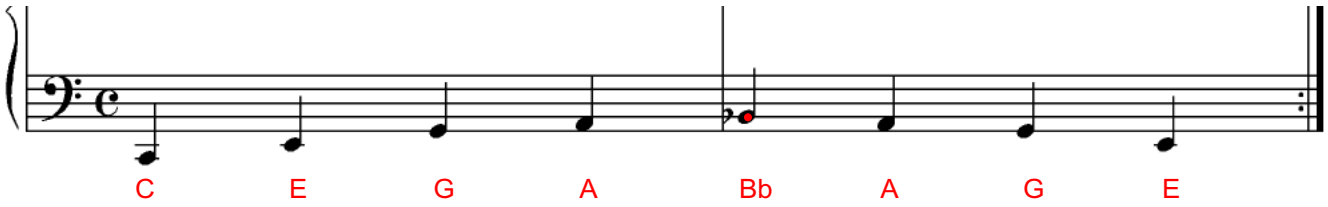
ADVANCED BLUES PIANO
A RECAP ON BOOK 2

In BOOK 2 you learned various **LEFT HAND** Rhythms

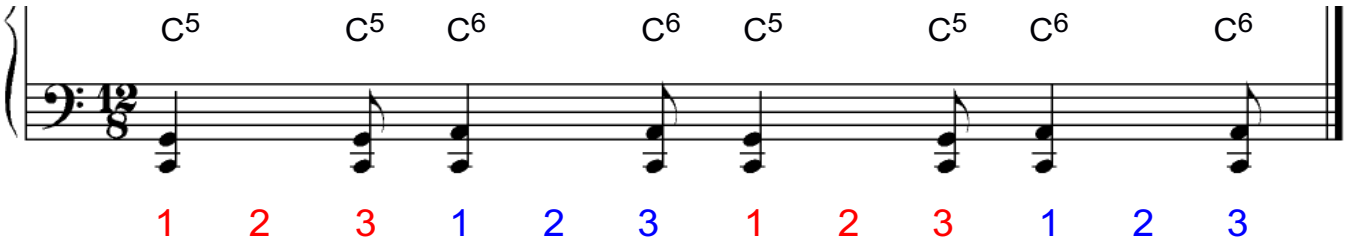
1. TRIAD BLUES

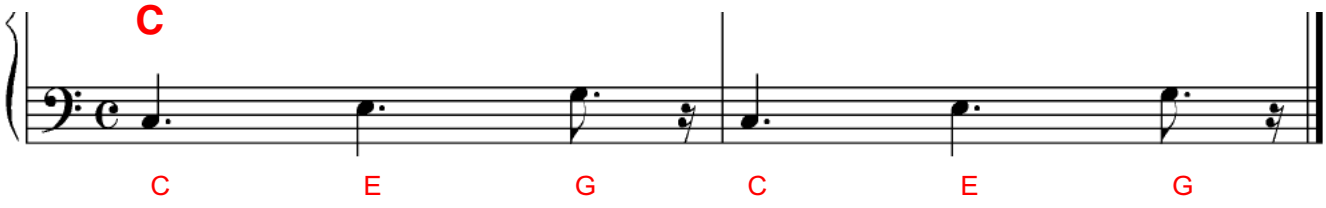


2. STRAIGHT EIGHT BOOGIE RHYTHM



3. THE 12/8 BOOGIE SHUFFLE RHYTHM



4. You can also use the TWIST RHYTHM you learned in book 1

ADVANCED BLUES PIANO
EXTENDING THE RIGHT HAND CHORDS

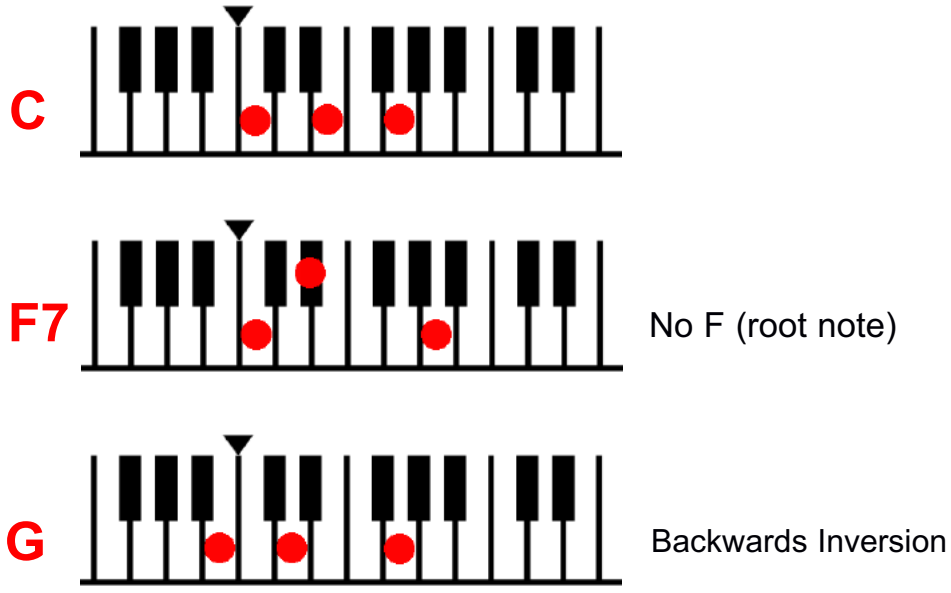
Don't be thinking that your RIGHT HAND has to be playing complicated riffs all the time. Blues is very rhythmic and because it is very often accompanying a song it needs to be rhythmic at times

You learned to add in a Right hand chord at the start of each bar in book 2

Now it's time to make Right Hand chords a bit more interesting.

First of all instead of just playing plain old basic triad chords in the right hand let's introduce some sevenths and some inversions

Find these three RIGHT HAND chords for the next practice tune



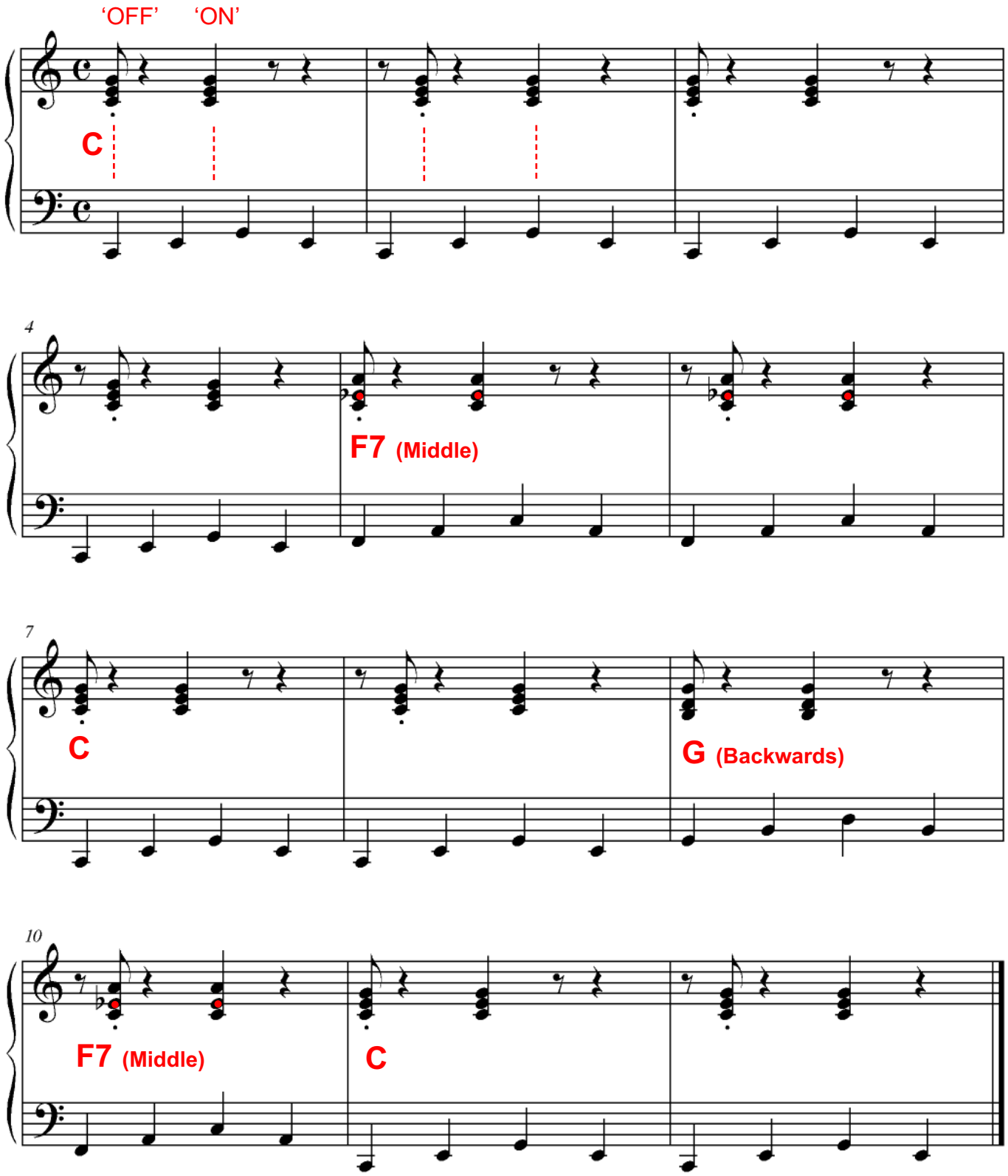
You're going to play them with what is called an 'OFF ON' rhythm.

The first beat is as if you are taking your hand quickly OFF the keys (you snap at the chord quickly) The second beat is as if you are placing the chord back ON the piano - and it is held for longer.

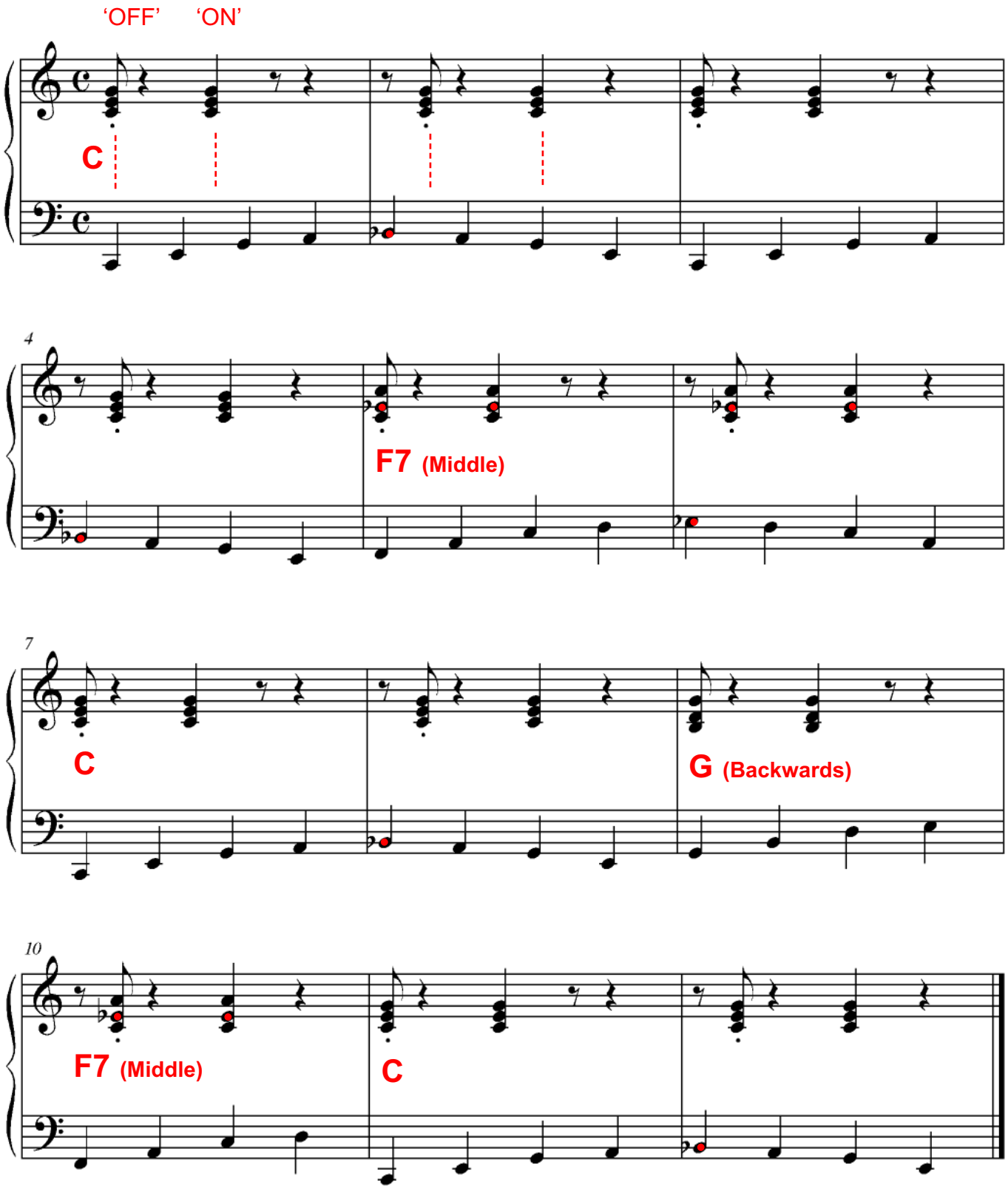
Notice that I have alternated where the FIRST Right Hand beat of each bar comes in so that you can practice both.

RIGHT HAND CHORD RIFFS

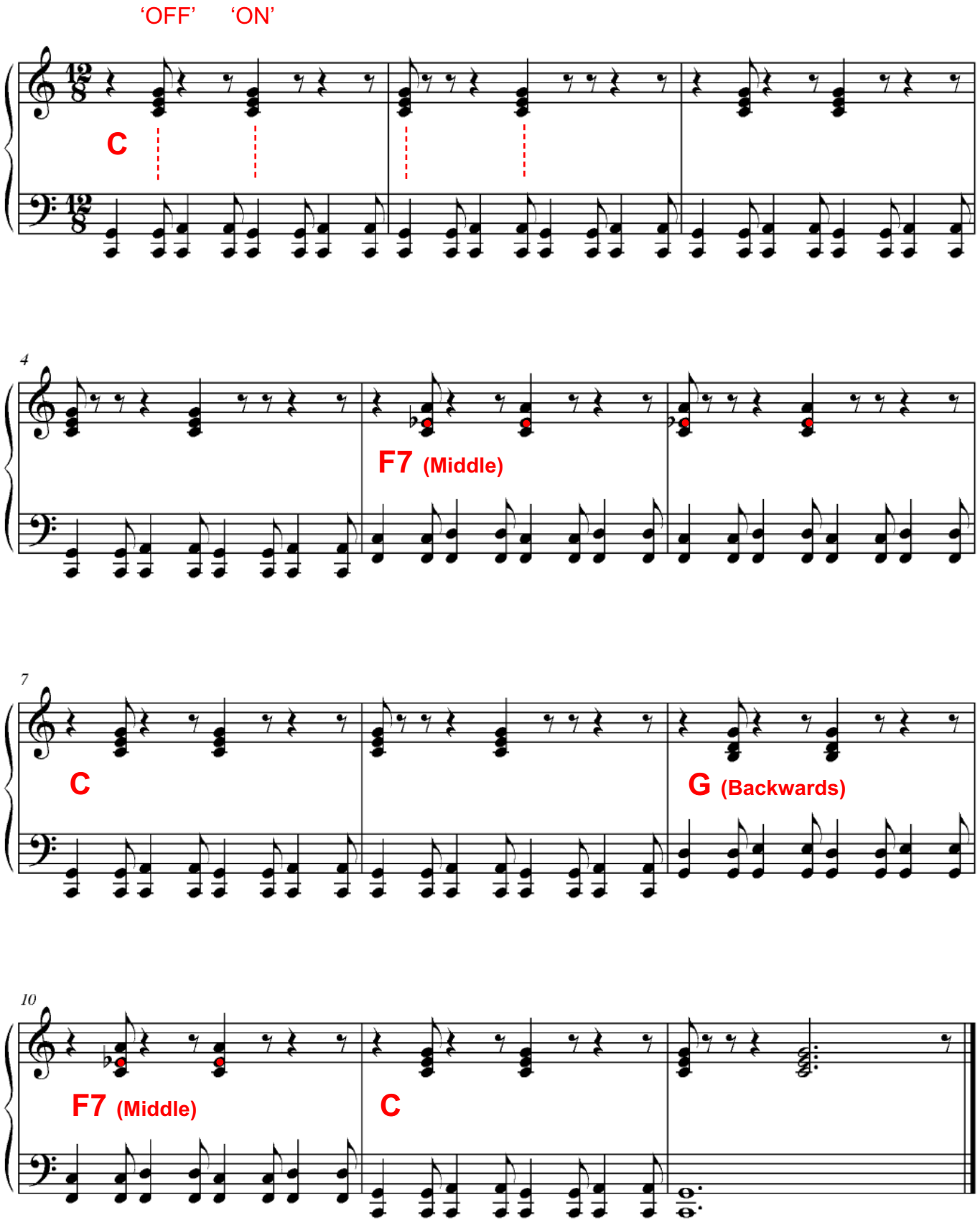
OFF-ON BLUES

TRIAD BLUES (Left Hand)

RIGHT HAND CHORD RIFFS

OFF-ON BOOGIE

STRAIGHT EIGHT BOOGIE (Left Hand)

RIGHT HAND CHORD RIFFS

OFF-ON SHUFFLE

12/8 SHUFFLE (Left Hand)

RIGHT HAND CHORD RIFFS
THE DOUBLE SHUFFLE

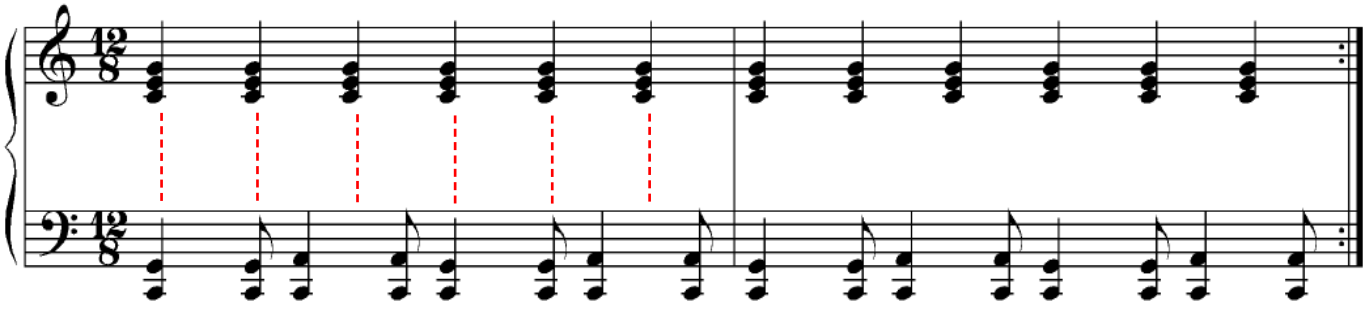
Try the DOUBLE SHUFFLE on the next page. This is a great rhythm that drives the beat forward like a train.

It LOOKS hard but once you ‘get’ it you won’t forget it!
Listen carefully to the sound clip

Observe WHERE the RIGHT HAND chords fit into the LEFT HAND rhythm.

Play it **VERY** slowly to begin with

RIGHT HAND C CHORD



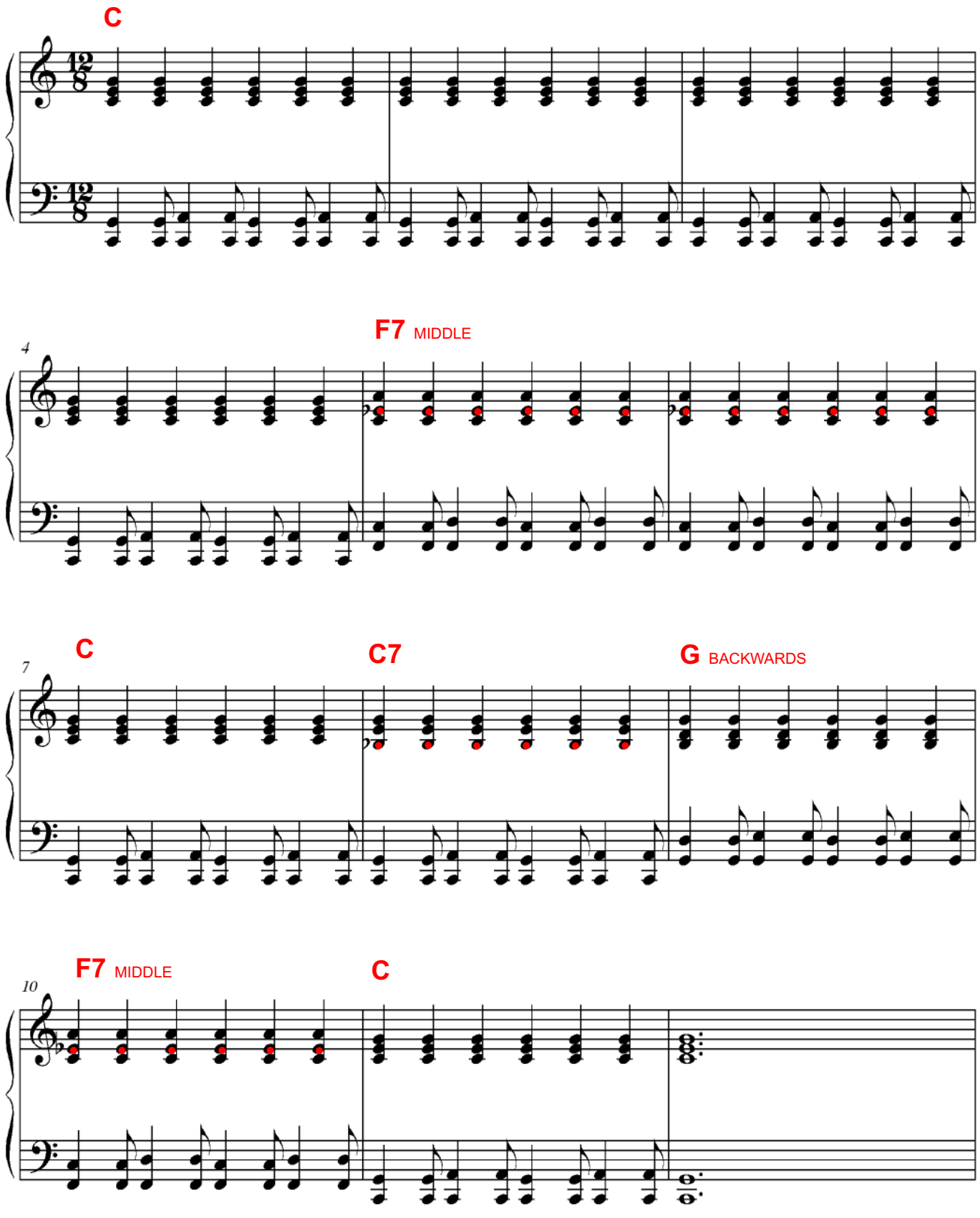
LEFT HAND 12/8 SHUFFLE RHYTHM

Now try it with a full 12 Bar Blues sequence

RIGHT HAND CHORD RIFFS

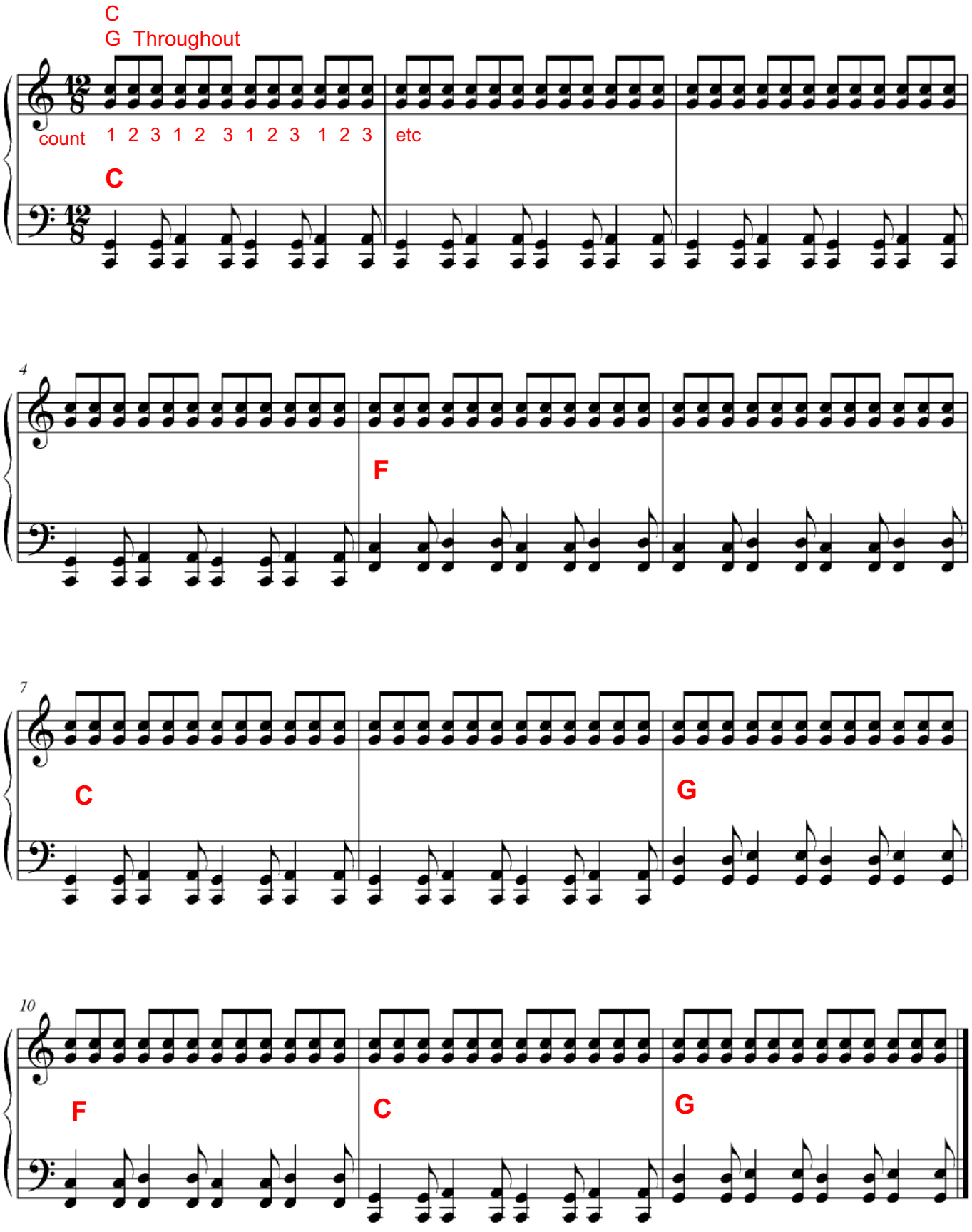
DOUBLE SHUFFLE

12/8 SHUFFLE (Left Hand)



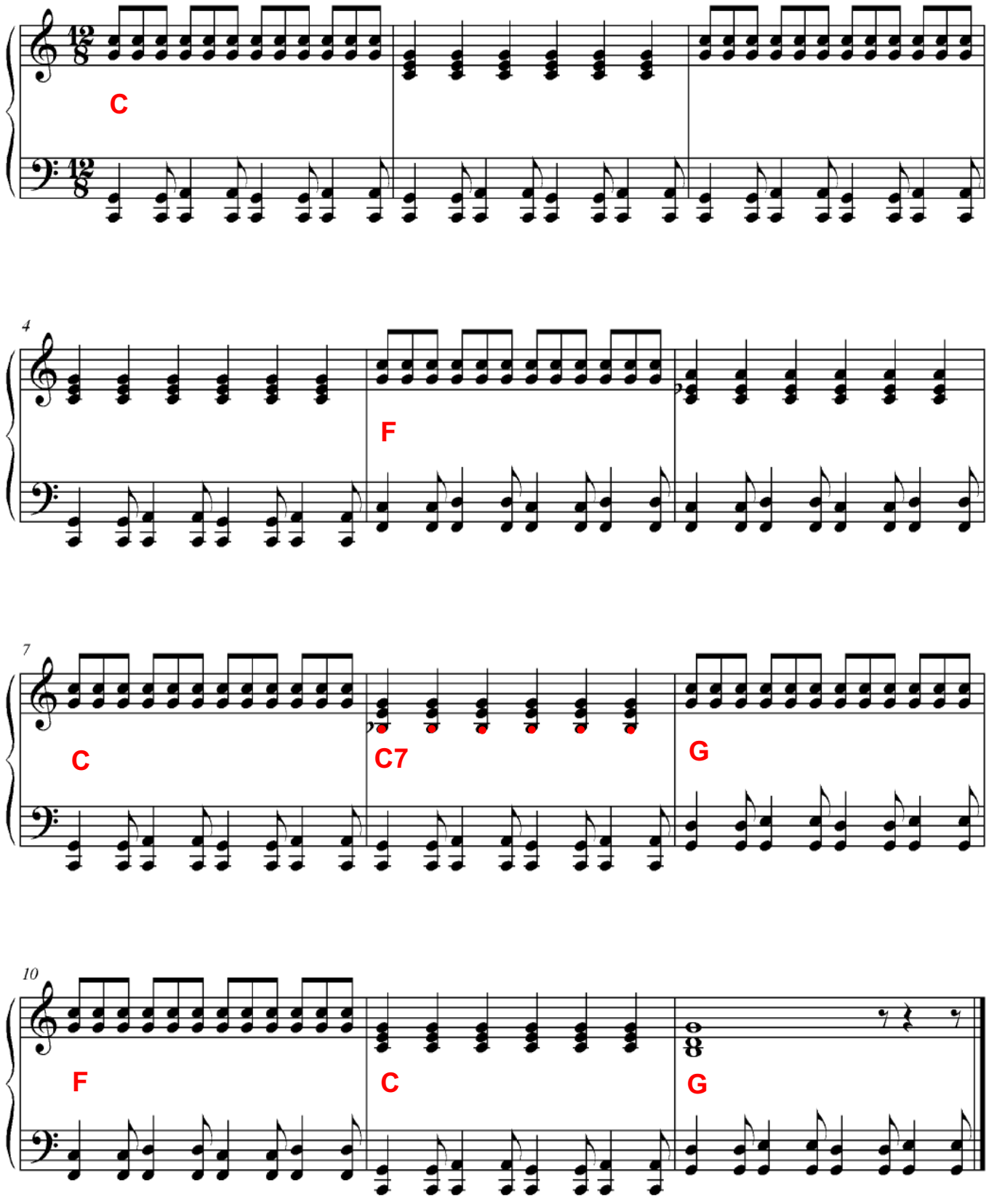
RIGHT HAND CHORD RIFFS

TRIPLETS SHUFFLE

12/8 SHUFFLE (Left Hand)

RIGHT HAND CHORD RIFFS

TRIPLETS & DOUBLE SHUFFLE MIX

12/8 SHUFFLE (Left Hand)



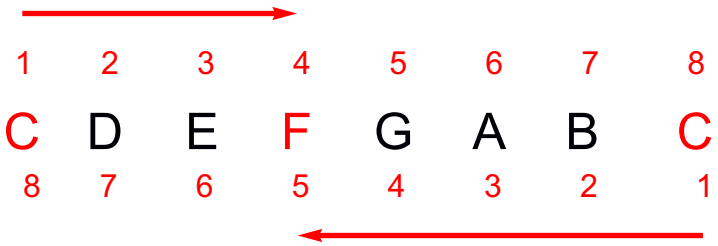
RIGHT HAND CHORD RIFFS
THE POPULAR I-IV RIFF

One of the most common occurrences in ALL types of music is the movement of one chord to another chord that is four steps above (using a major scale)

For instance
C to F D to G E to A F to Bb G to C A to D B to E

I know this will sound very confusing - but this movement is known as the CYCLE OF FIFTHS.

The reason for this is that the movement is often in a DOWNWARDS direction ie from C DOWN to F which is FIVE steps if you count it backwards on the scale



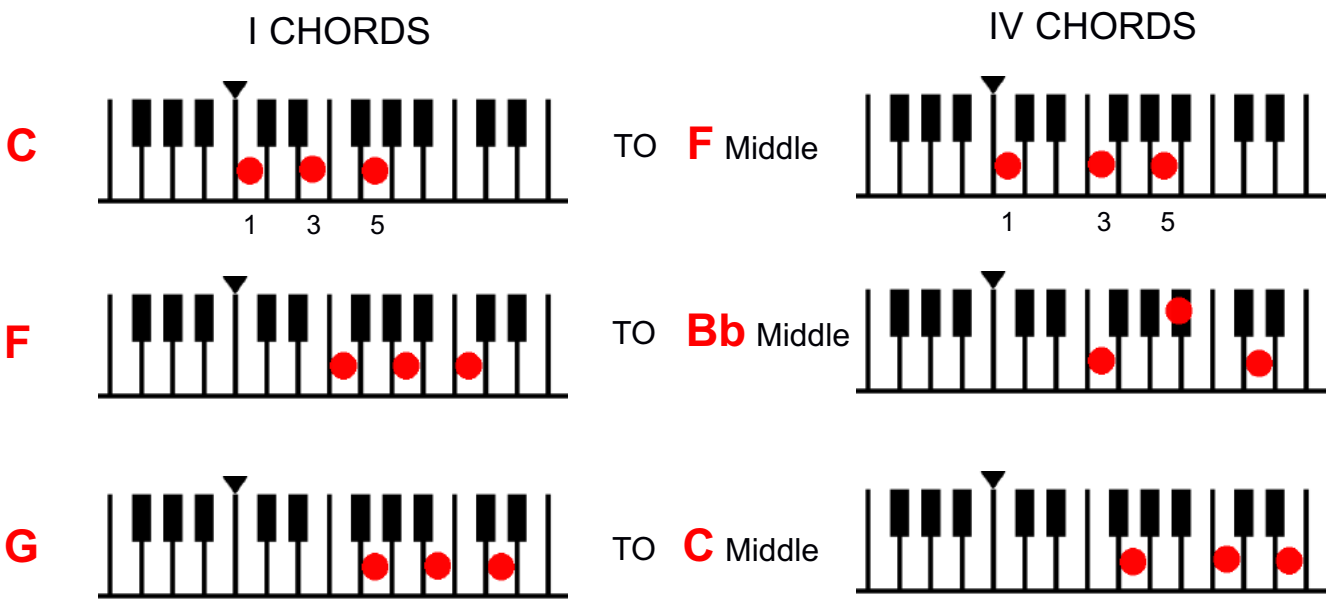
All you need to know for now is the movement to a chord FOUR steps above
ie C to F F to Bb G to C

because you can make great use of this movement in your BLUES and GOSPEL playing.

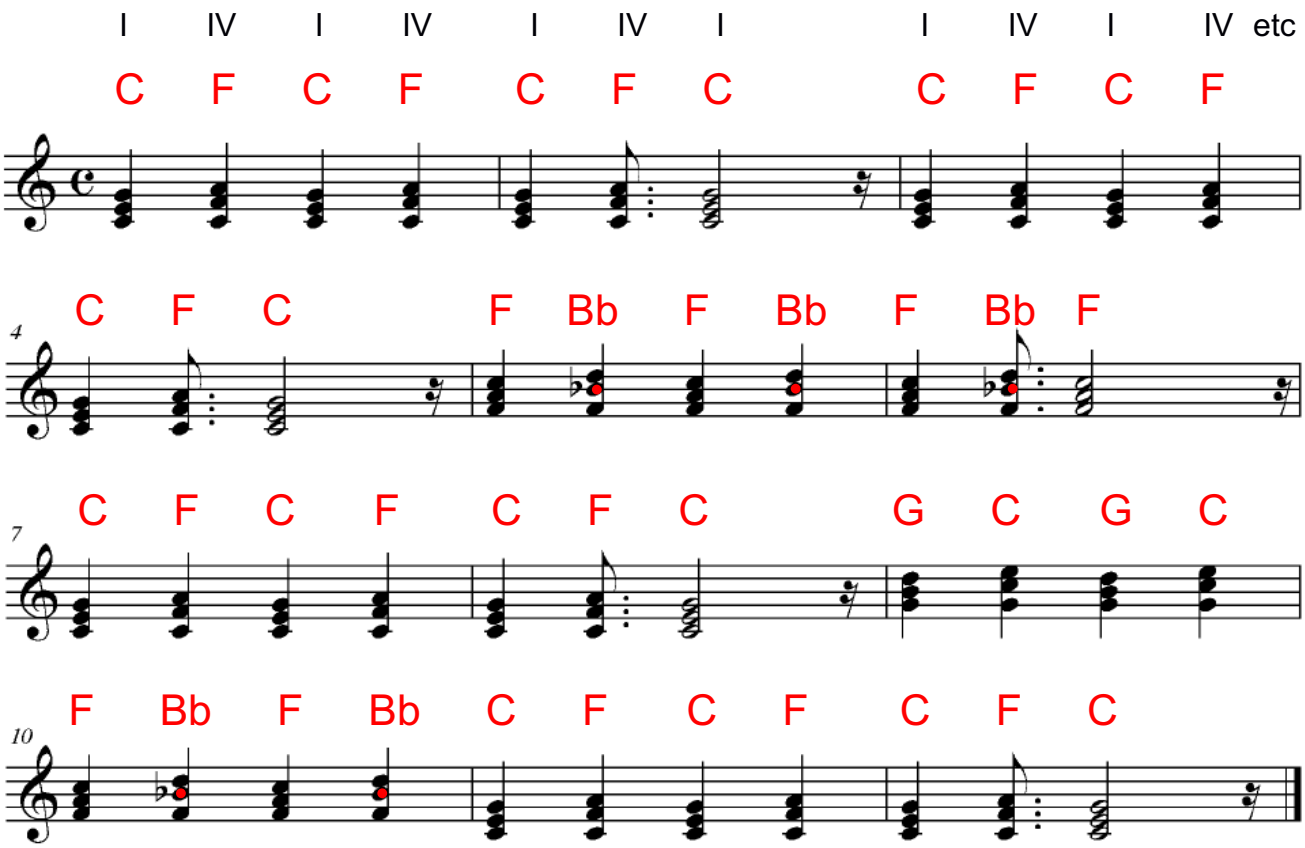
Try the following sequence on the next page..

RIGHT HAND CHORD RIFFS

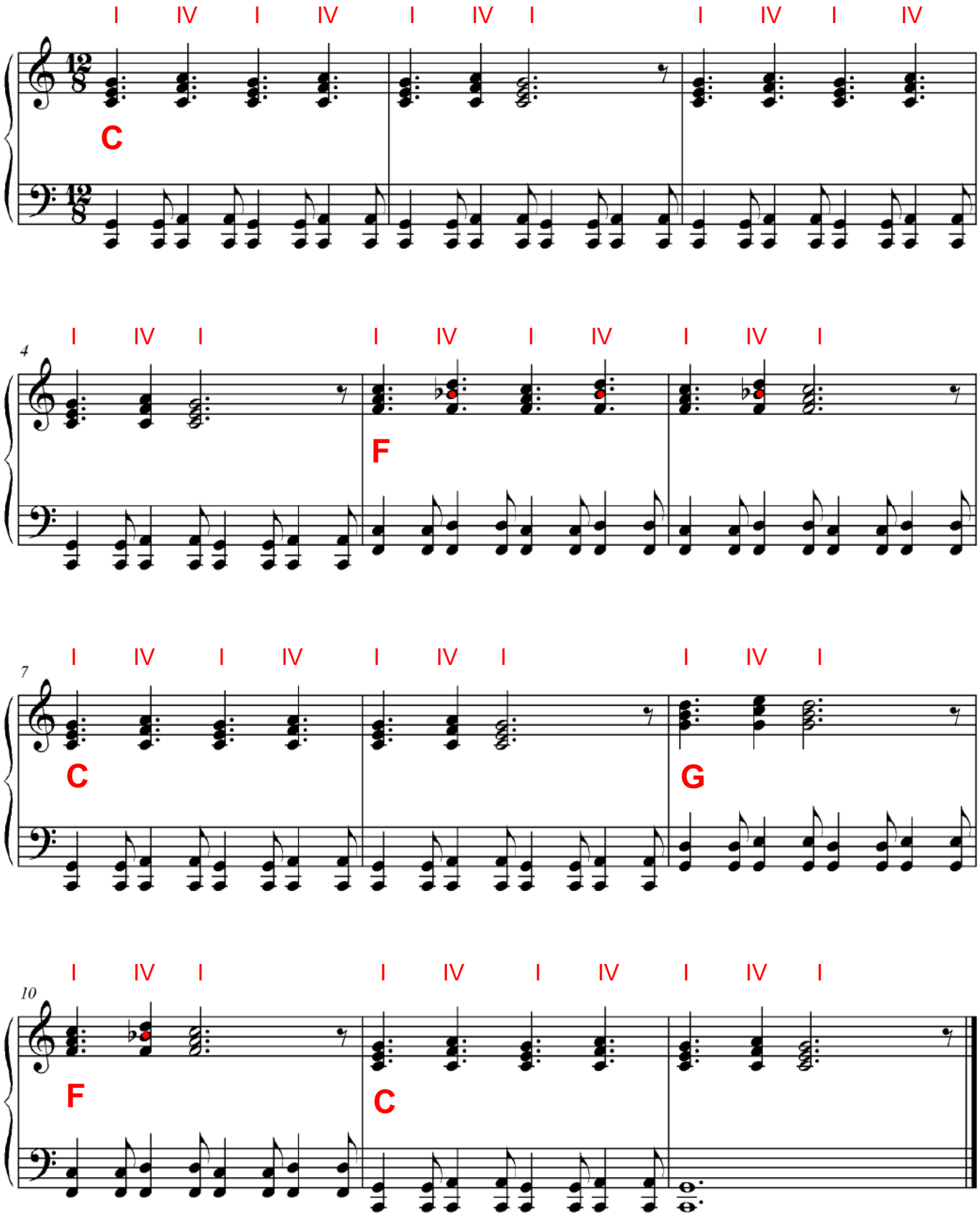
THE POPULAR I-IV RIFF



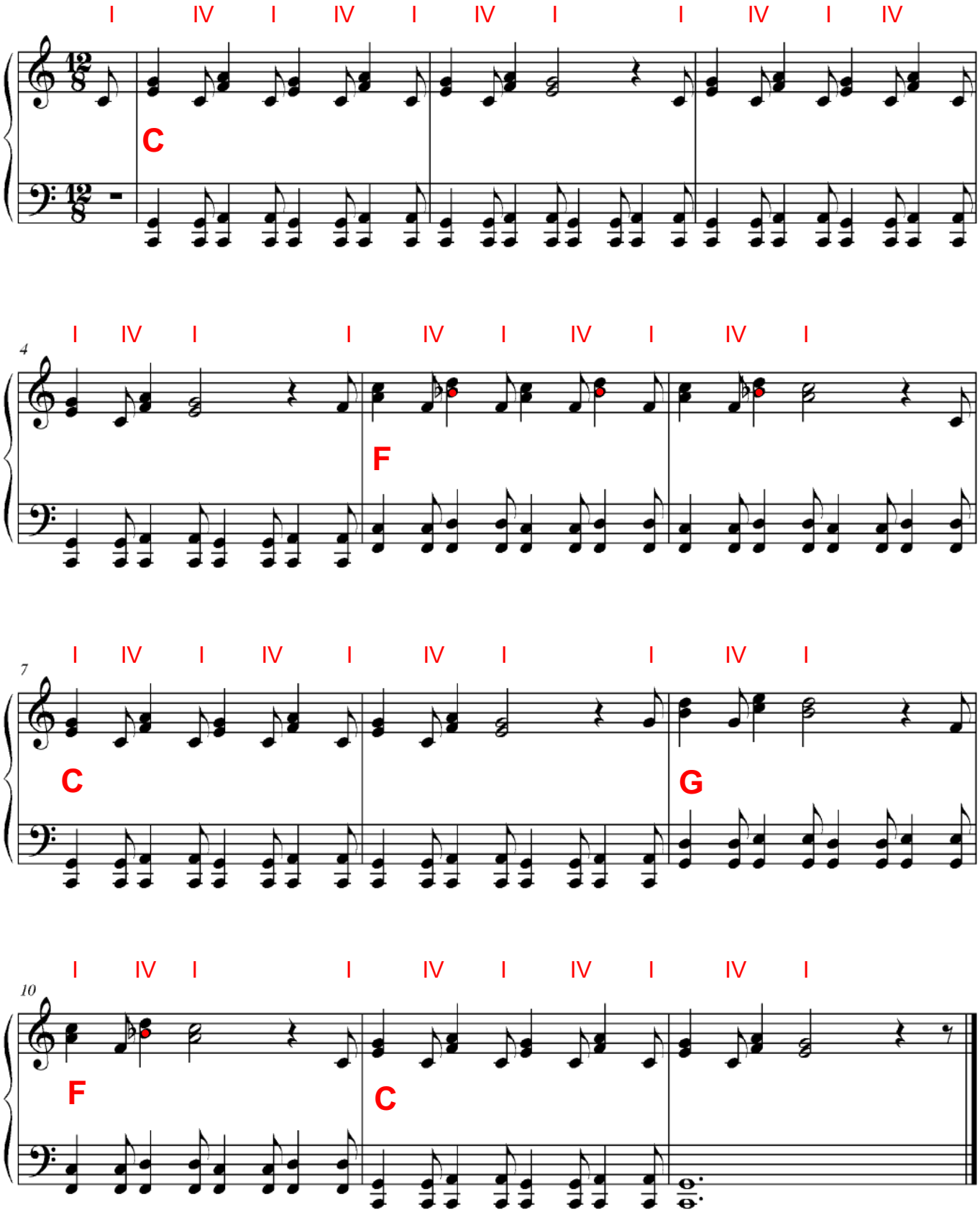
RIGHT HAND I-IV BLUES



RIGHT HAND CHORD RIFFS

I-IV SHUFFLE BLUES

RIGHT HAND CHORD RIFFS

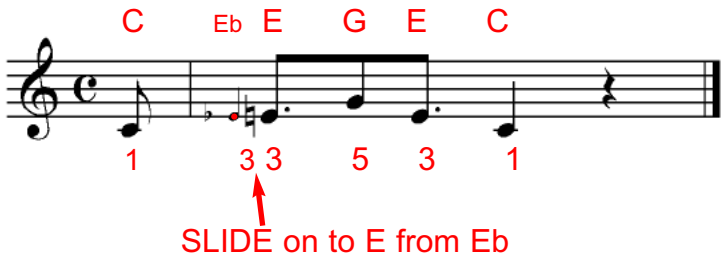
I-IV SHUFFLE BLUES No.2

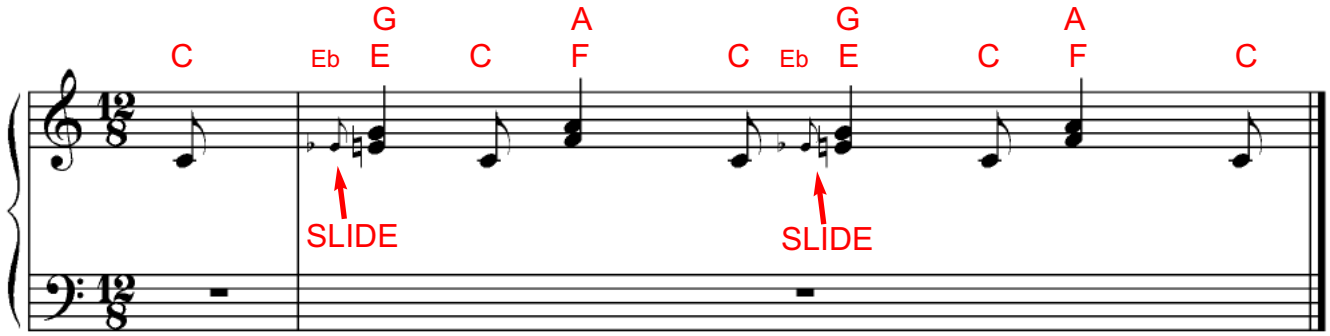
This version splits each chord up and alternates between thumb and 3rd & 5th fingers

RIGHT HAND CHORD RIFFS
I-IV SLIDE

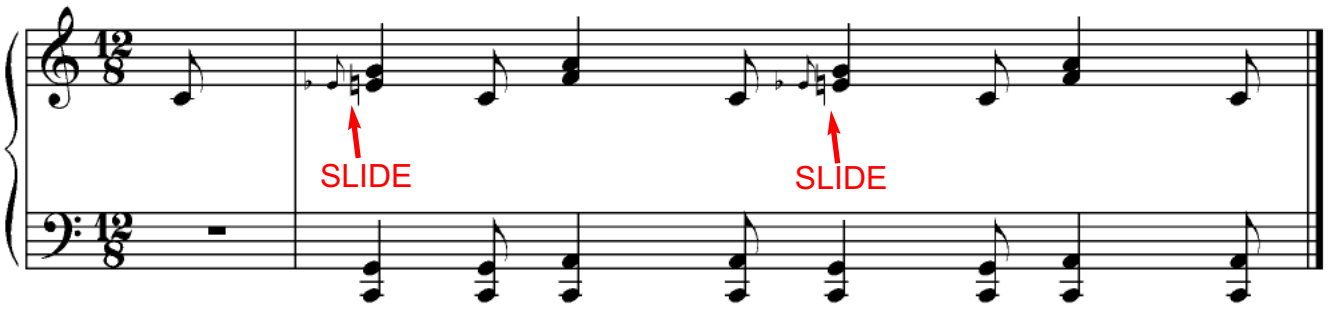
Blues often uses a device known as a SLIDE

This is when you quickly bounce off one note onto another
For instance if you bounce off Eb onto E

It almost sounds as if you are ‘bending’ the note as you would on a Guitar.

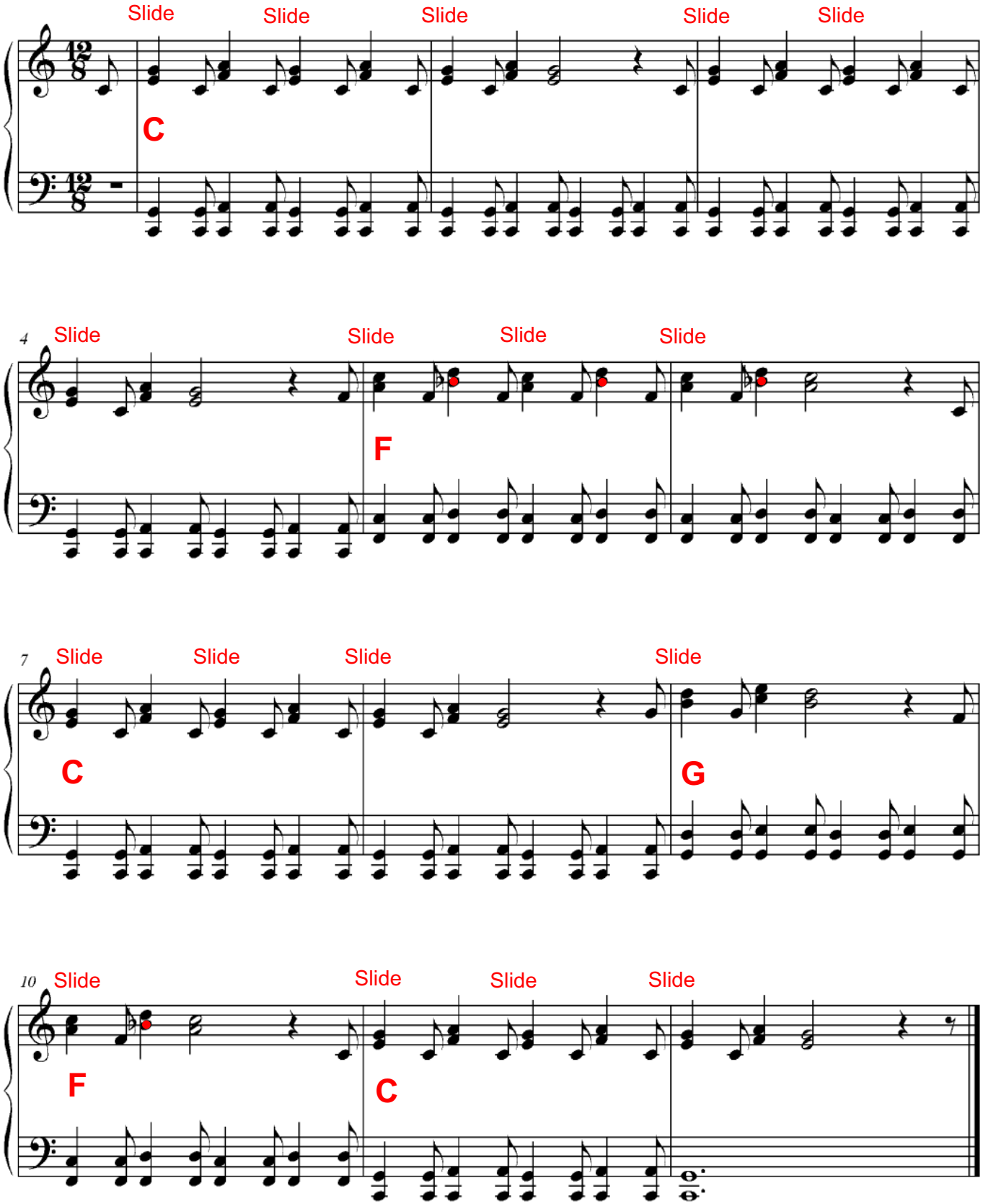
Try the following riff. I call it the ‘Bonnie & Clyde’ Riff.

Now try a SLIDE with the split chord I-IV riff



Then try it with the Left Hand Shuffle Rhythm

Now try the I-IV SHUFFLE BLUES No 2 on the next page and use this SLIDE. Transpose it to the other two chords F and G.

RIGHT HAND CHORD RIFFS

I-IV SLIDE SHUFFLE

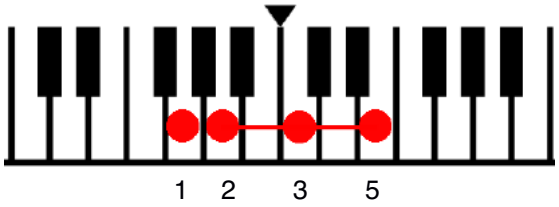
I didn't do the SLIDE in music notation because it would have been too fiddly

RIGHT HAND CHORD RIFFS

SOME COOL NEW RIGHT HAND CHORDS

We can extend the Right Hand chords even further and create some really Bluesy sounds.

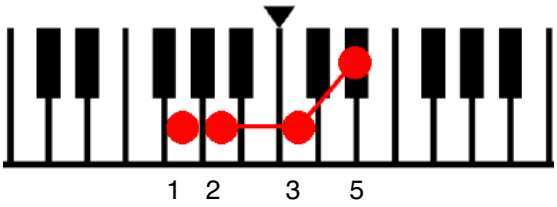
Find these three chords and try the ‘ON - OFF’ rhythm again with the various left hand rhythms

C6



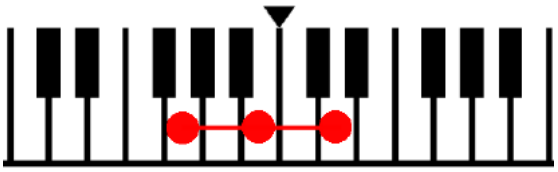
Middle Inversion
added 6th (A)

F7$_9$



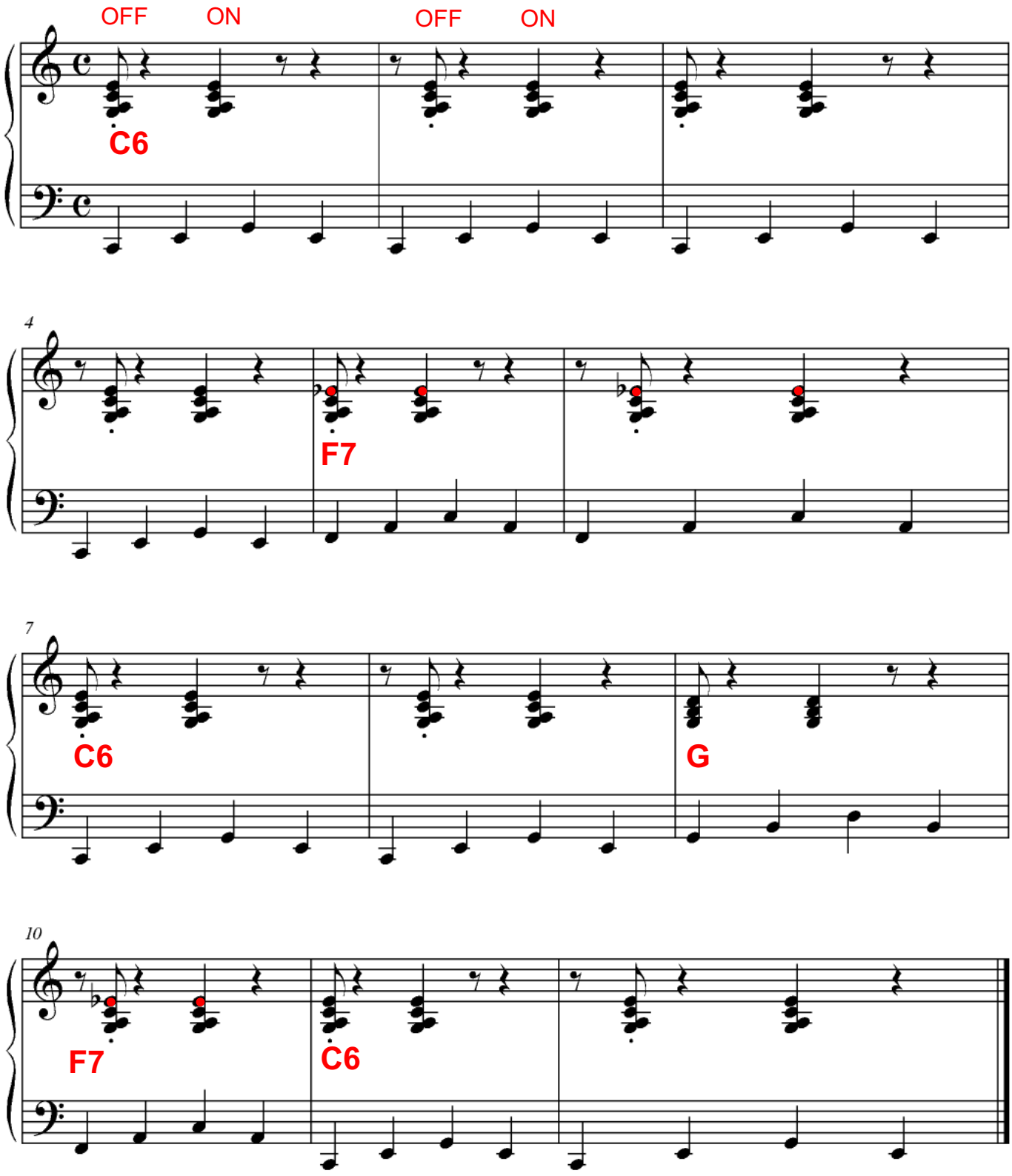
No root note
added 9th (G)

G

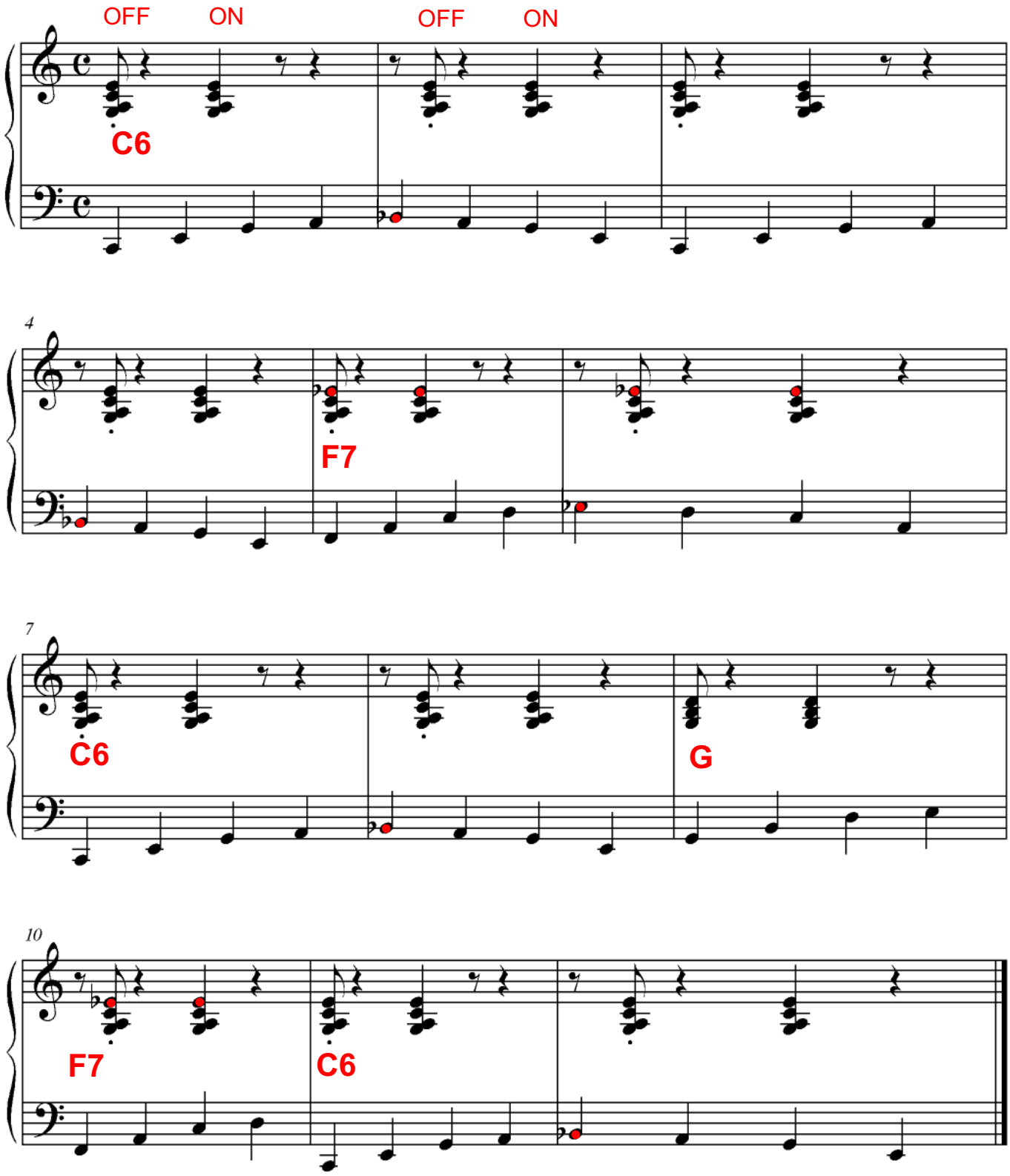


RIGHT HAND CHORD RIFFS

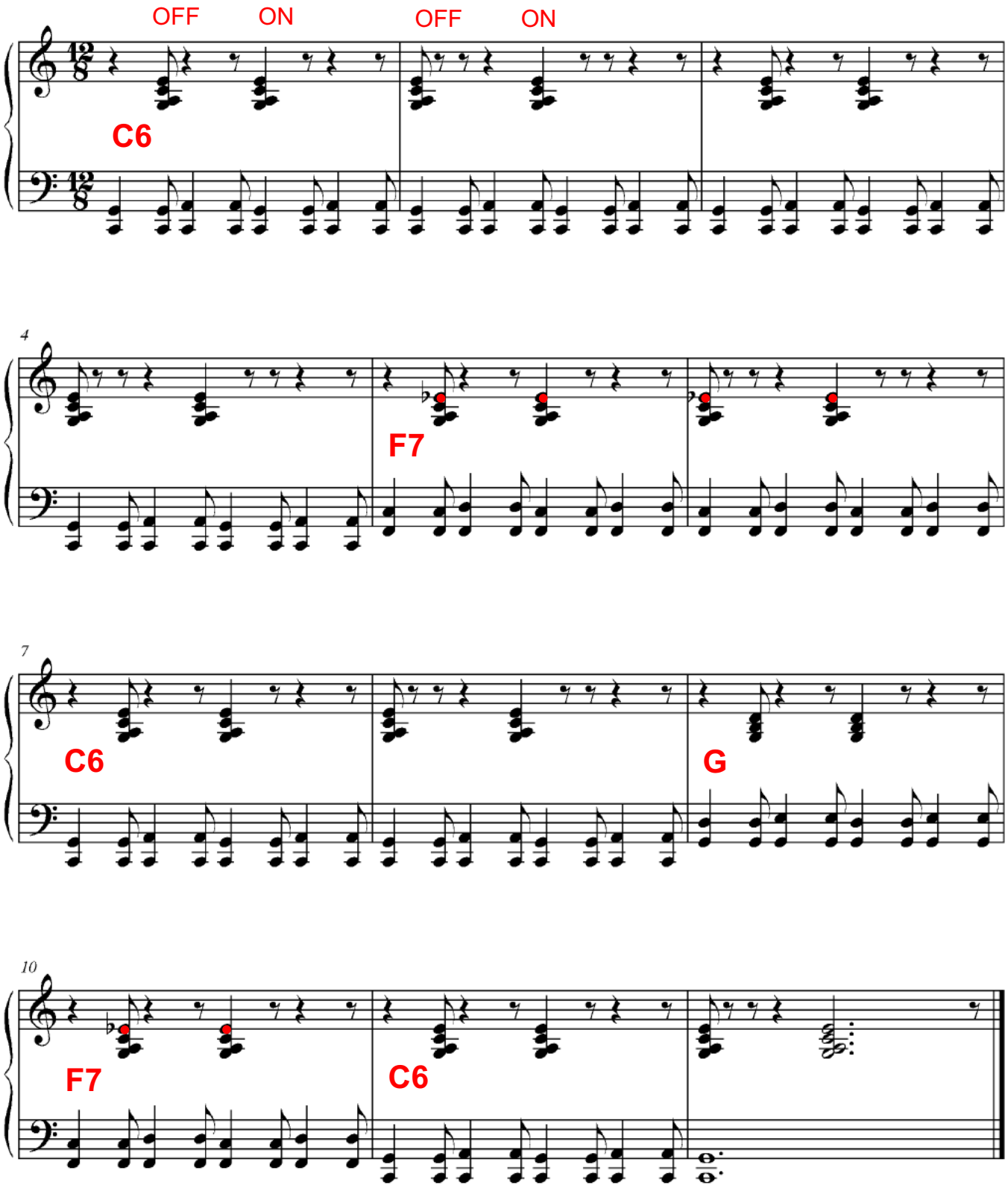
OFF-ON RHYTHM

TRIAD BLUES (Left Hand)

RIGHT HAND CHORD RIFFS

OFF-ON BOOGIE

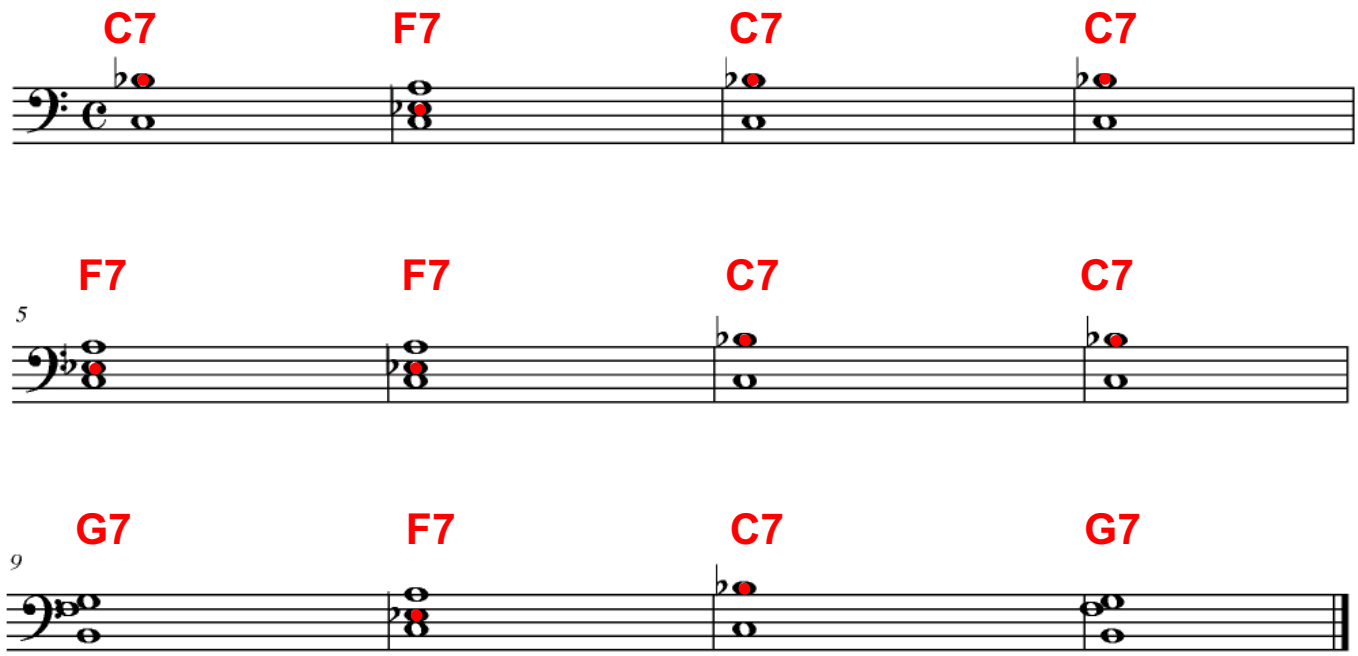
STRAIGHT EIGHT BOOGIE (Left Hand)

RIGHT HAND CHORD RIFFS

OFF-ON SHUFFLE

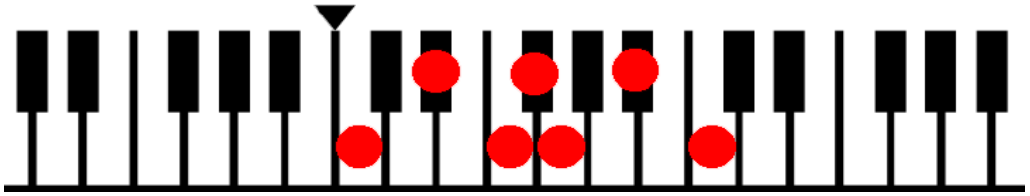
12/8 SHUFFLE (Left Hand)

RIGHT HAND RIFFS AND LICKS

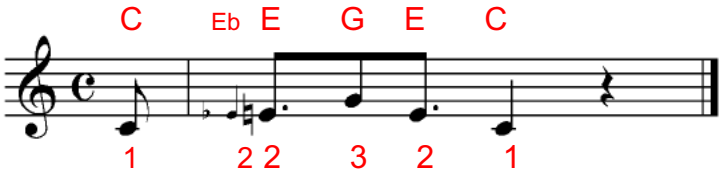
In book 6 you learned some Right Hand licks and patterns that you played over ‘static’ left hand seventh chords.

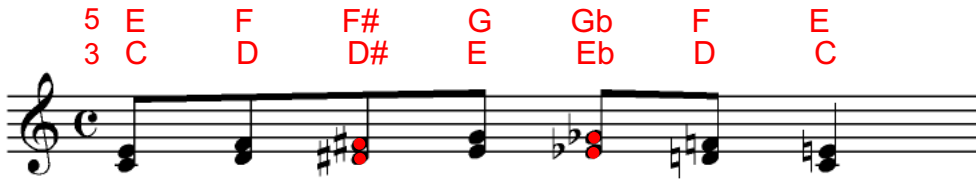
‘STATIC’ LEFT HAND CHORDS - 12 BAR BLUES



C BLUES SCALE



C BLUES SCALE - PATTERNS AND LICKS

7- 24.3



ETC

ADVANCED BLUES PIANO
Putting it all together

Now it's time to try some RIGHT HAND patterns WITH the LEFT HAND Rhythms.

The key to success is REPEATED PRACTICE.

Experiment with all the patterns and licks. Start with the LEFT HAND and once you get into the rhythm add in the RIGHT HAND.

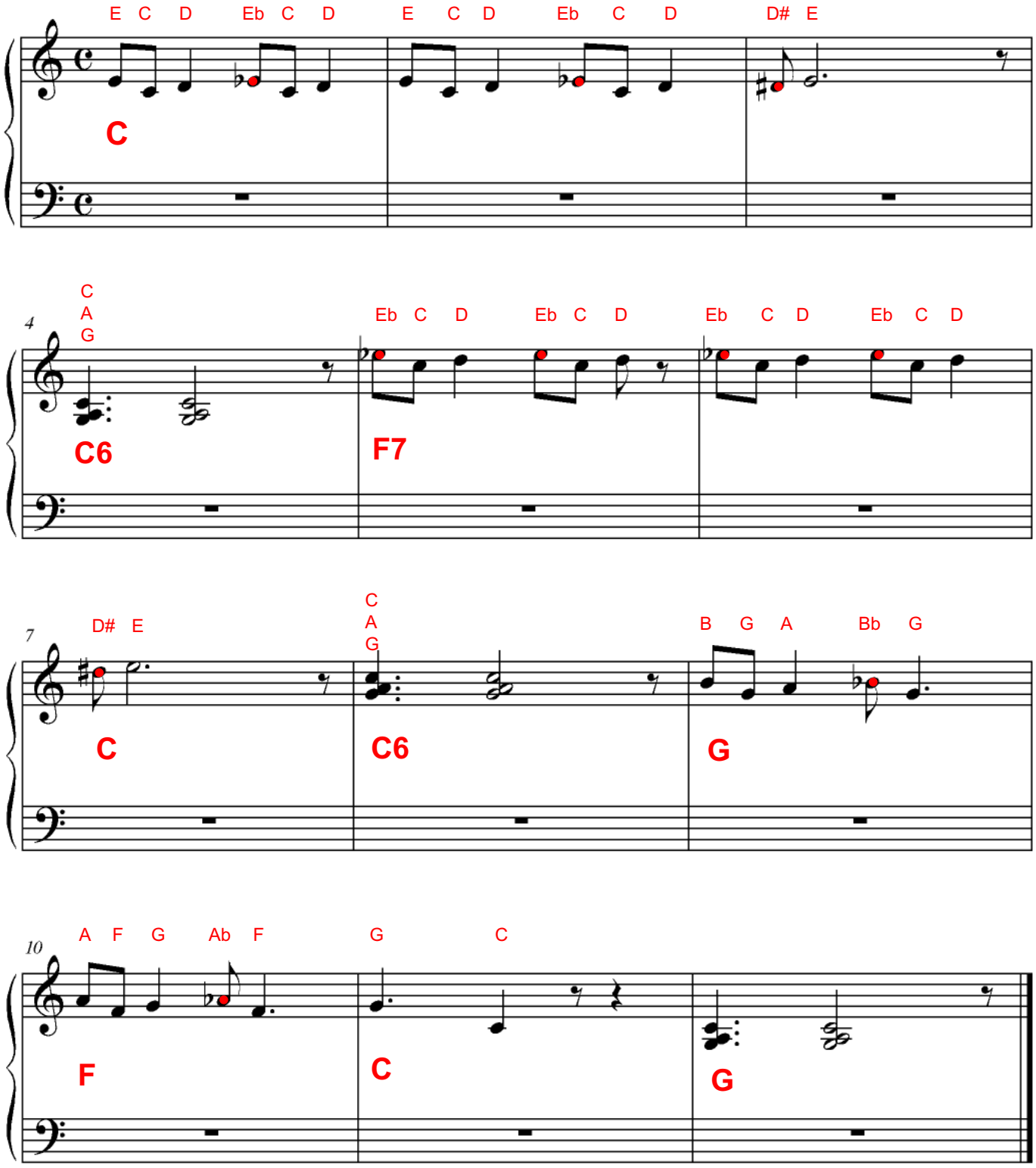
It's OK to make mistakes!

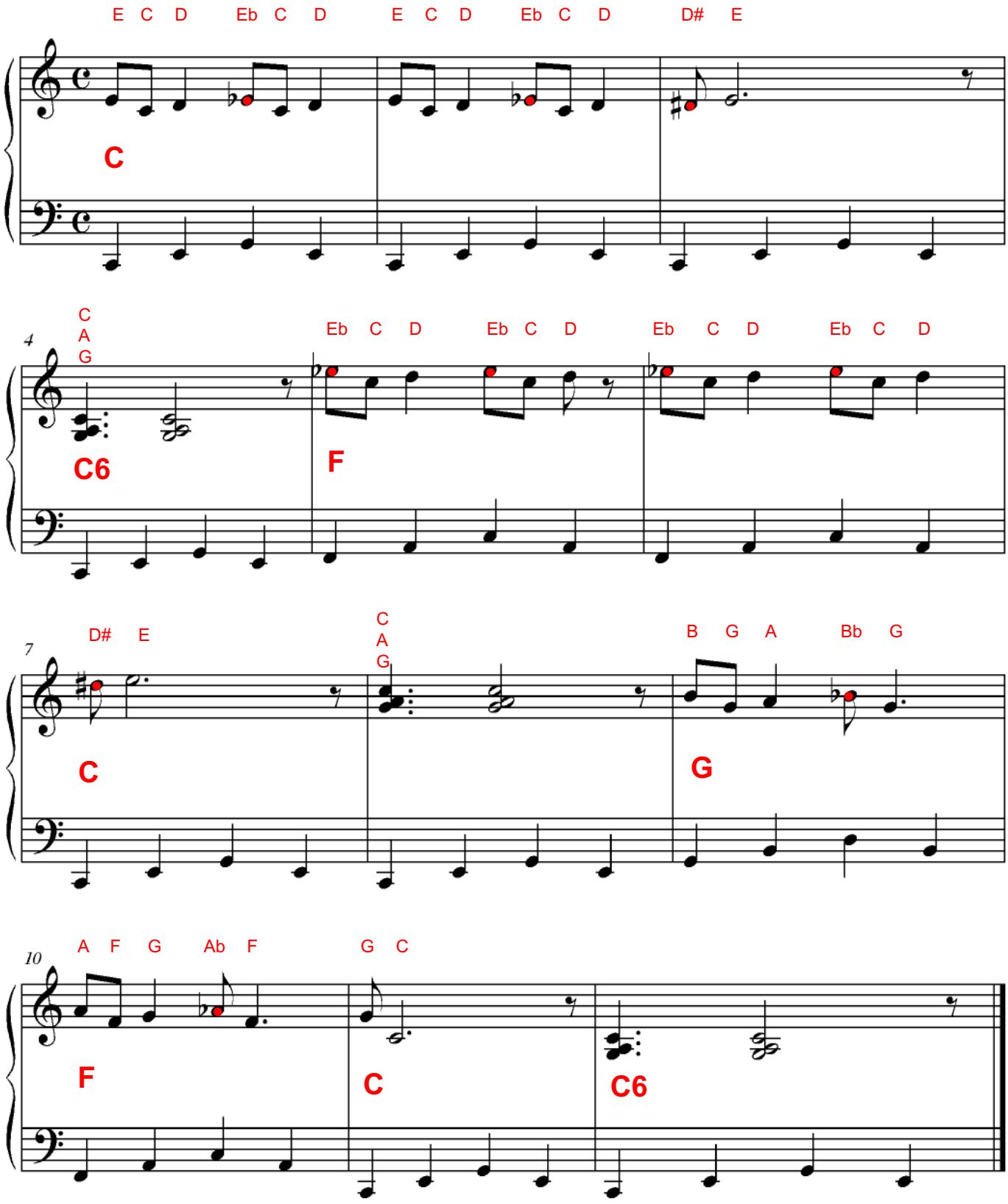
Let's start with a simple three note pattern.

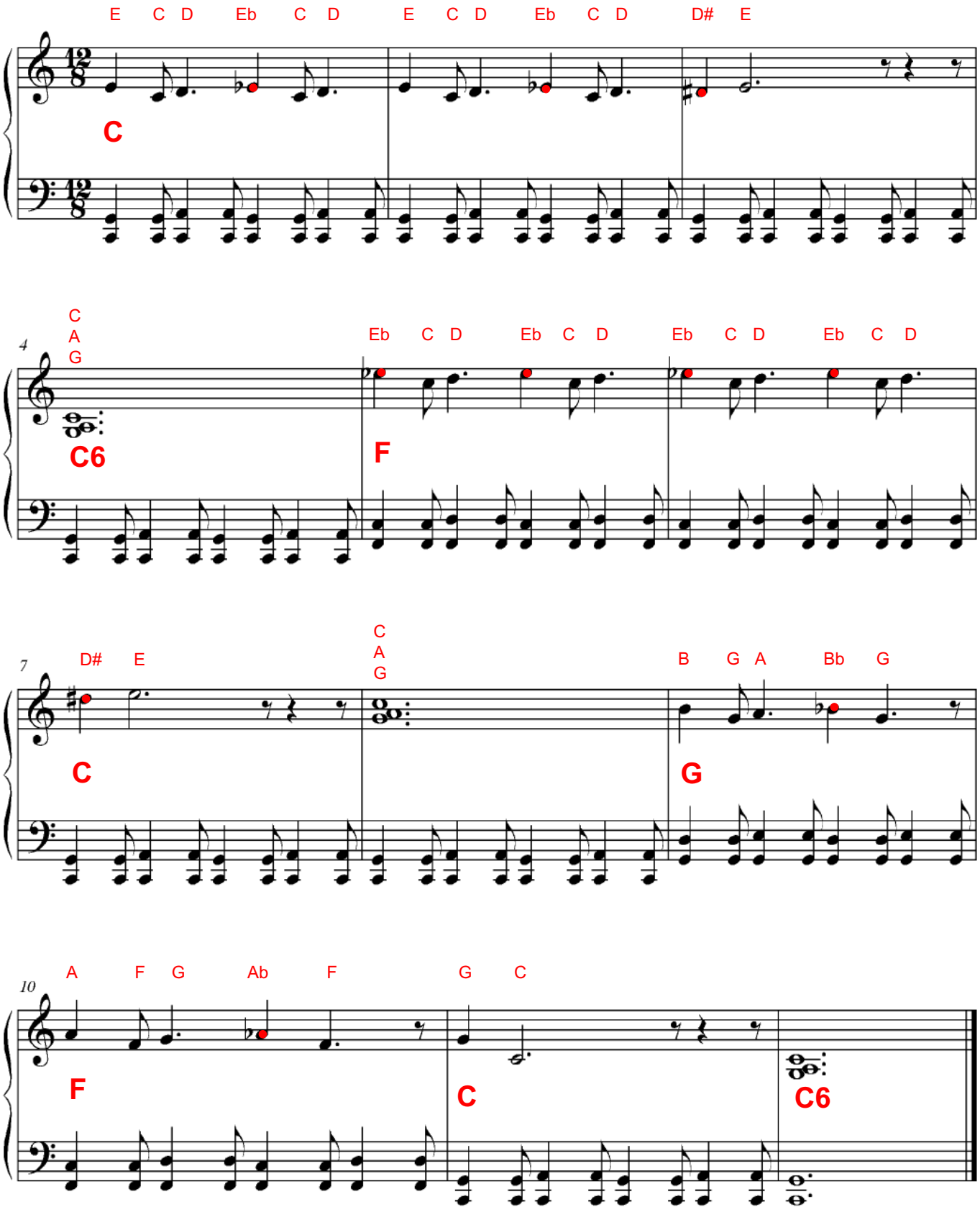
The THREE NOTE JUMP

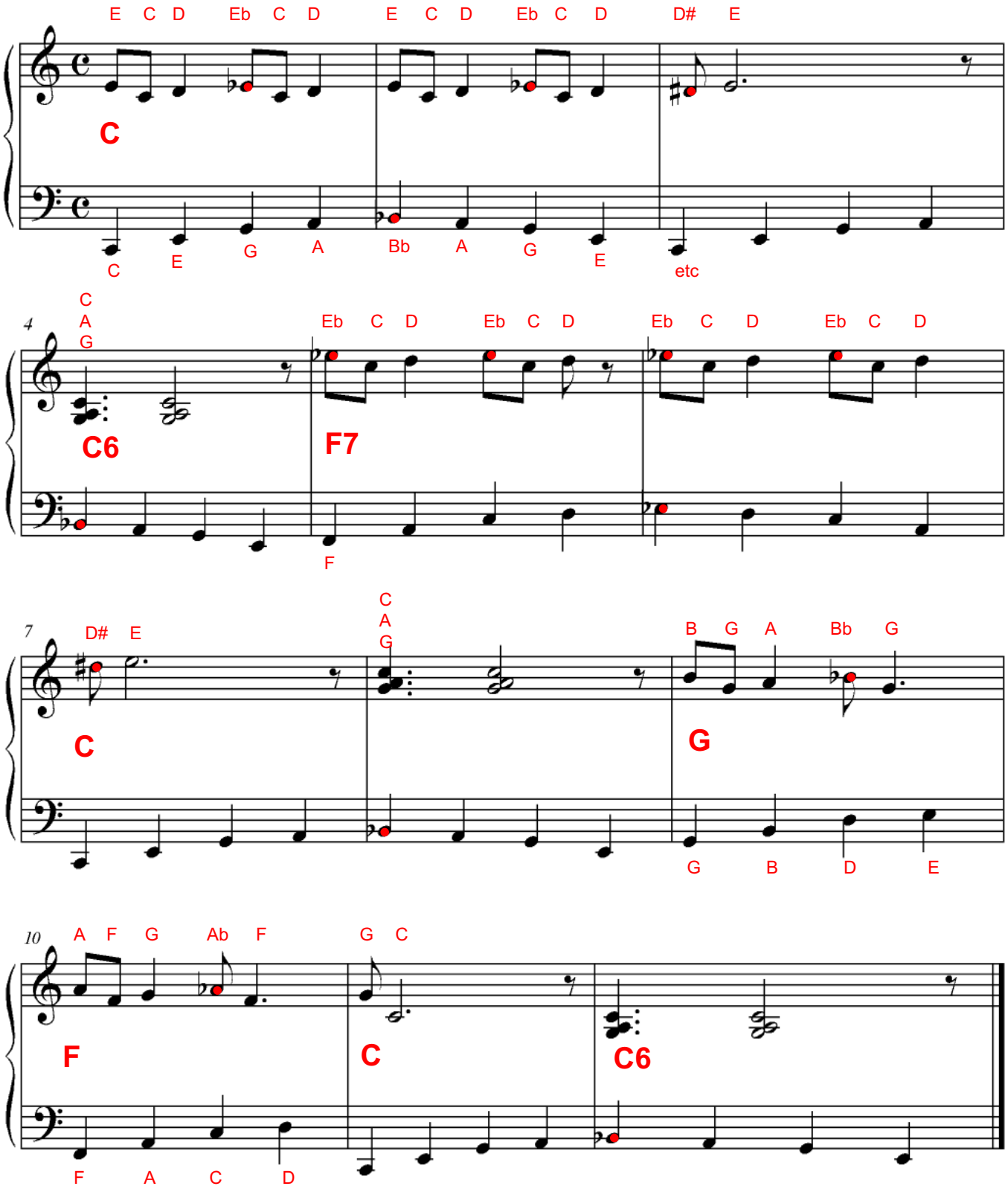
It's called a '3 1 2' pattern because your third finger plays the first note then your first finger (thumb) then your second finger. (3 1 2)

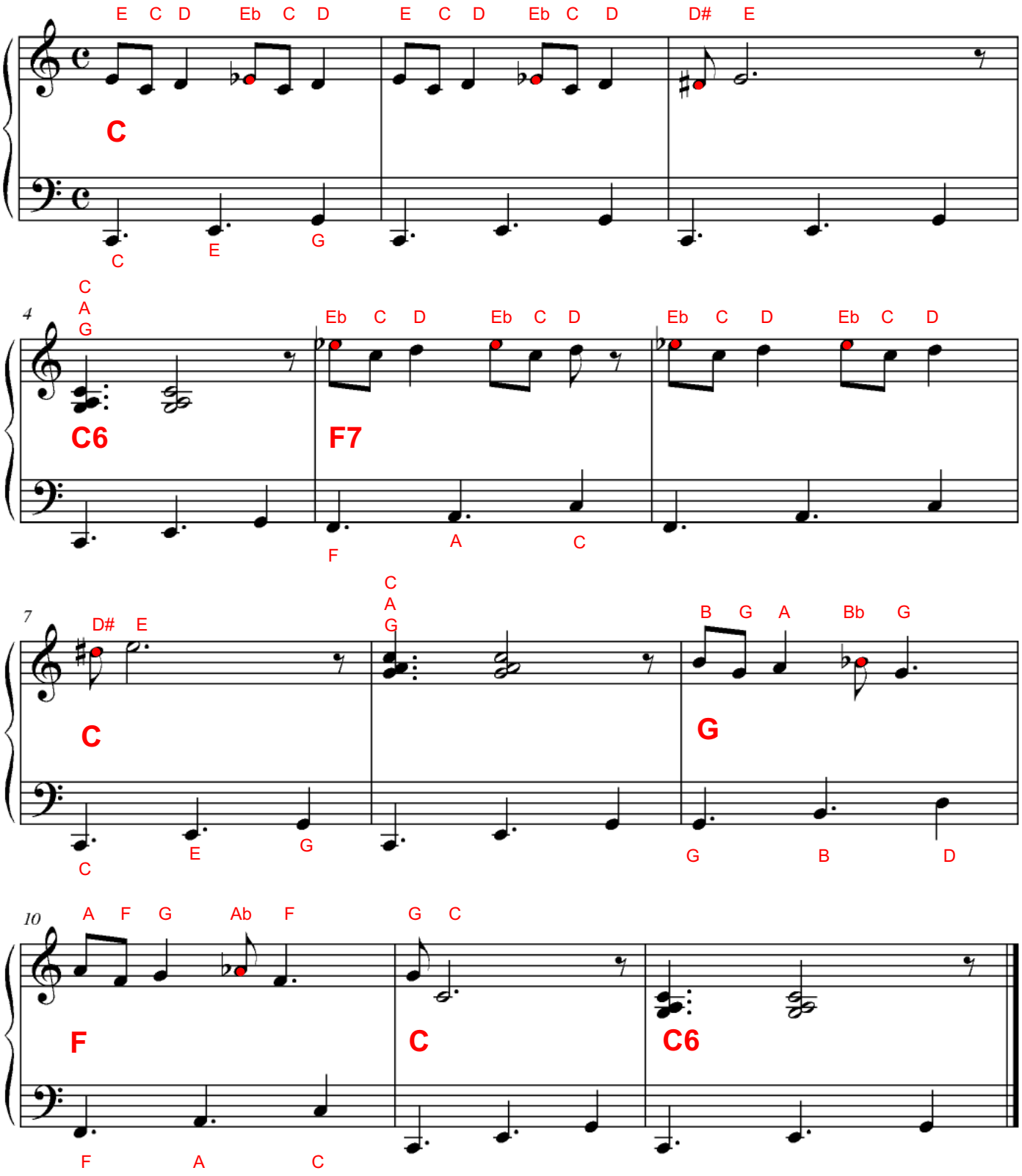
THREE NOTE JUMP

RIGHT HAND ONLY

THREE NOTE JUMP

TRIAD BLUES (Left Hand)

THREE NOTE JUMP SHUFFLE

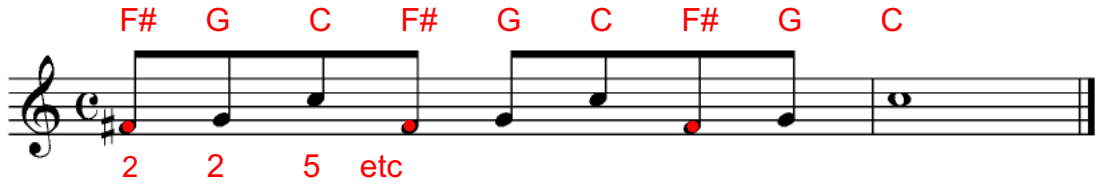
12/8 SHUFFLE (Left Hand)

THREE NOTE JUMP BOOGIE

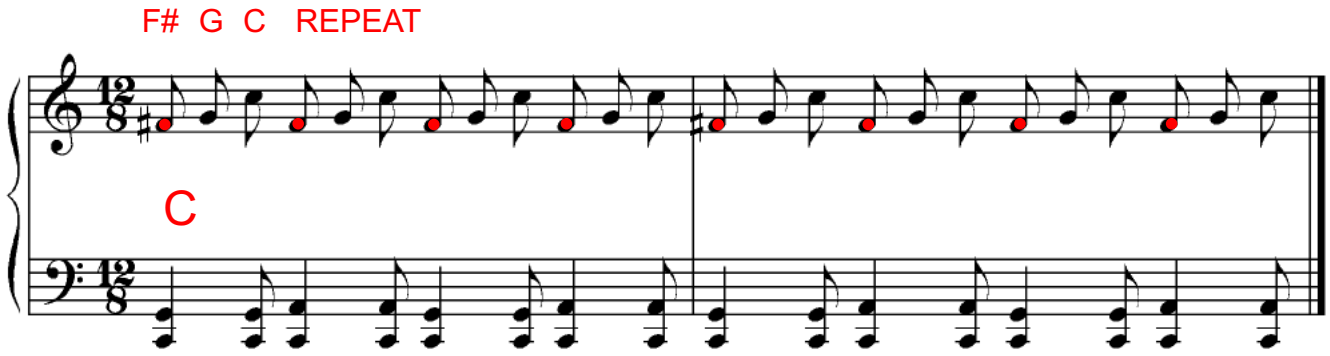
STRAIGHT EIGHT BOOGIE (Left Hand)

THREE NOTE JUMP TWIST

TWIST (Left Hand)

EXPERIMENT WITH VARIOUS RIFFS

You can see from the previous examples how to practice a riff or pattern.

1. Choose one of the RIGHT HAND patterns ie.



2. Play it repeatedly over one of the LEFT HAND rhythms ie.

Go through the entire 12 bar chord sequence so that you get used to playing a riff while you change chords.

Try the following riffs on the next page.

Then try them again with each of the other Left Hand rhythms -

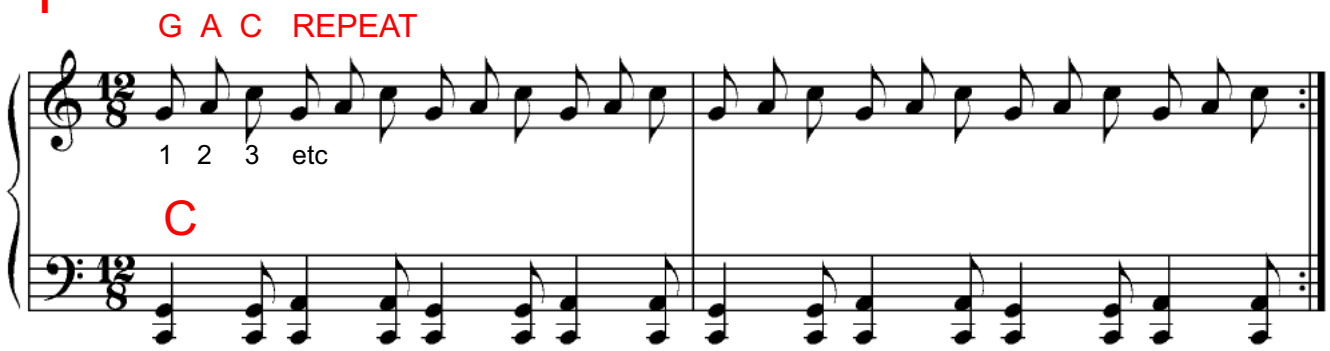
the **Straight 8 Boogie**

the **Beginners Blues**

and the **Twist** rhythm

VARIOUS RIFFS

12/8 SHUFFLE (Left Hand)

1

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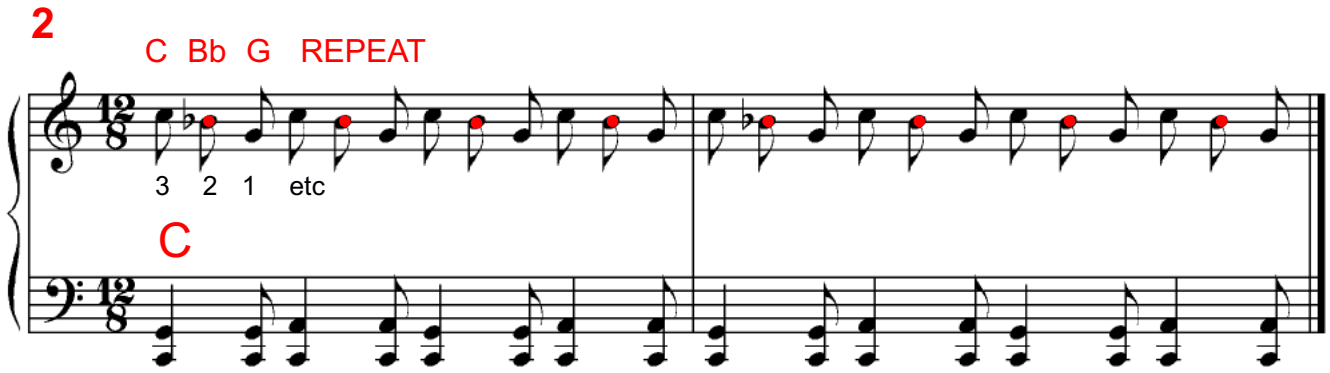
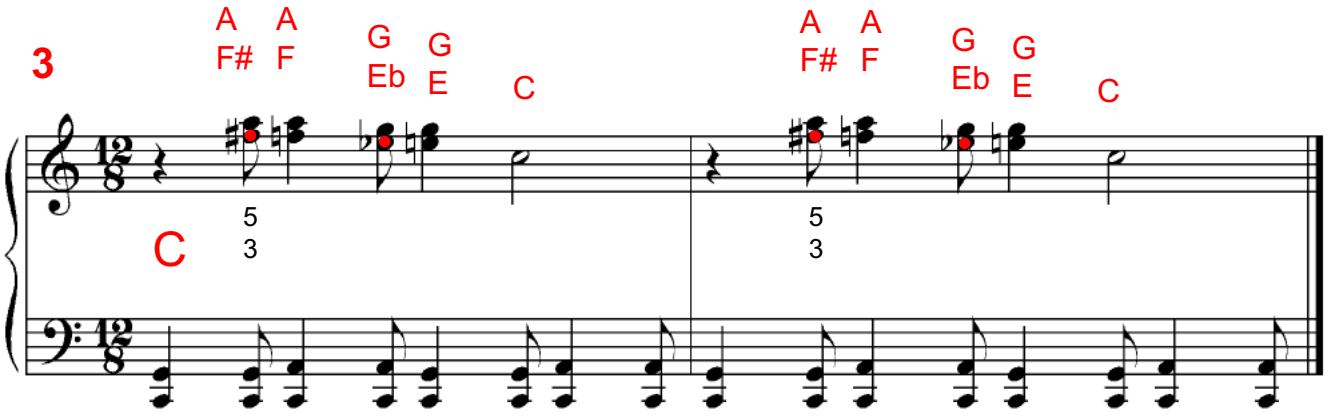


3



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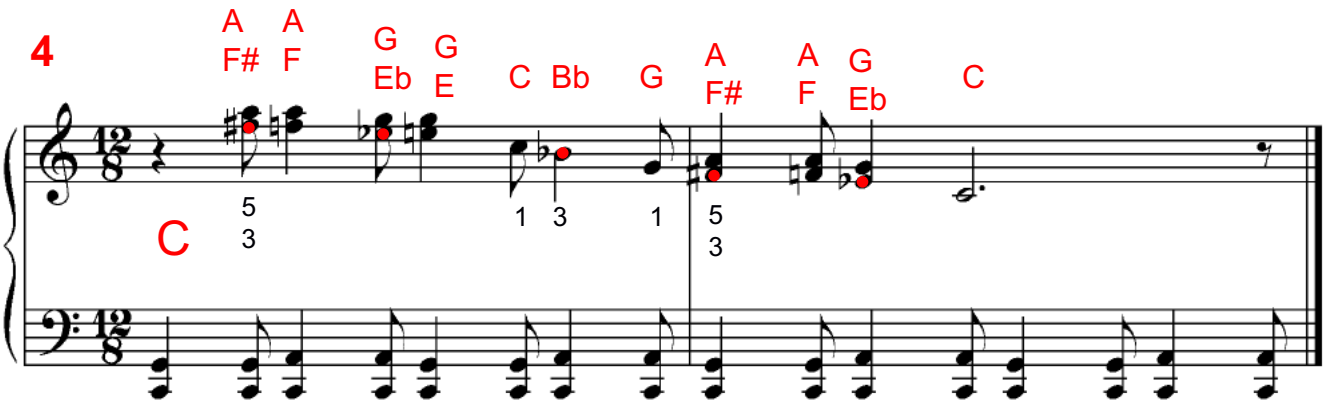
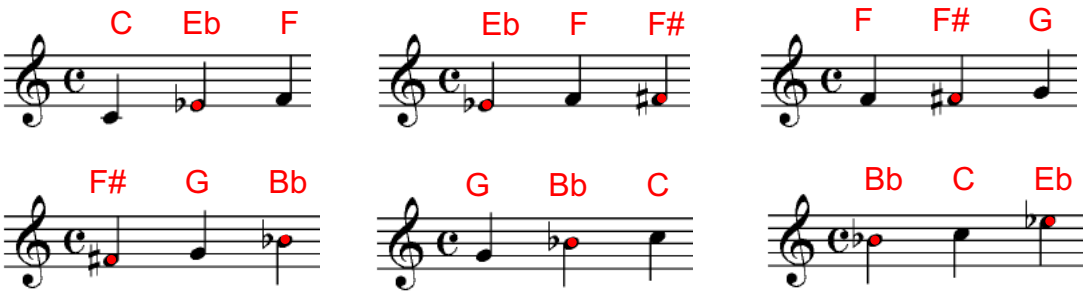
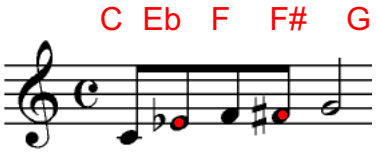
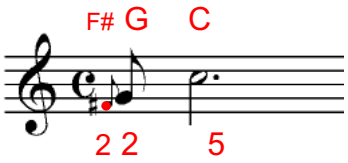


MORE RIFFS TO PRACTICE WITH
(from book 6)

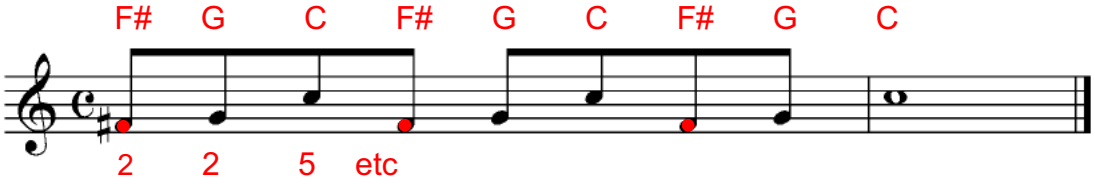
These three note patterns are taken from the BLUES SCALE - experiment with them

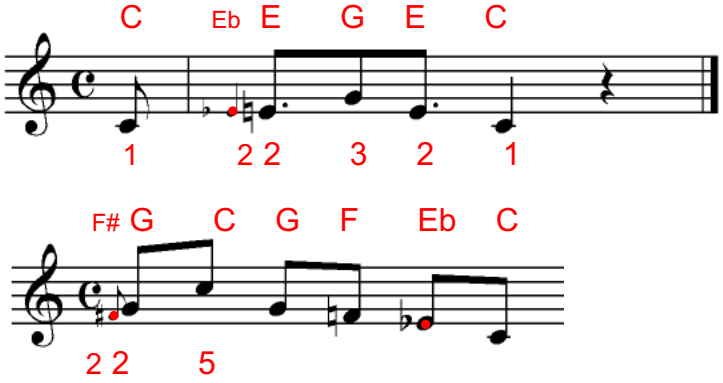


This is a five finger position for the scale

This is called a ‘SLIDE’ - you SLIDE onto the white key from the flat of the key

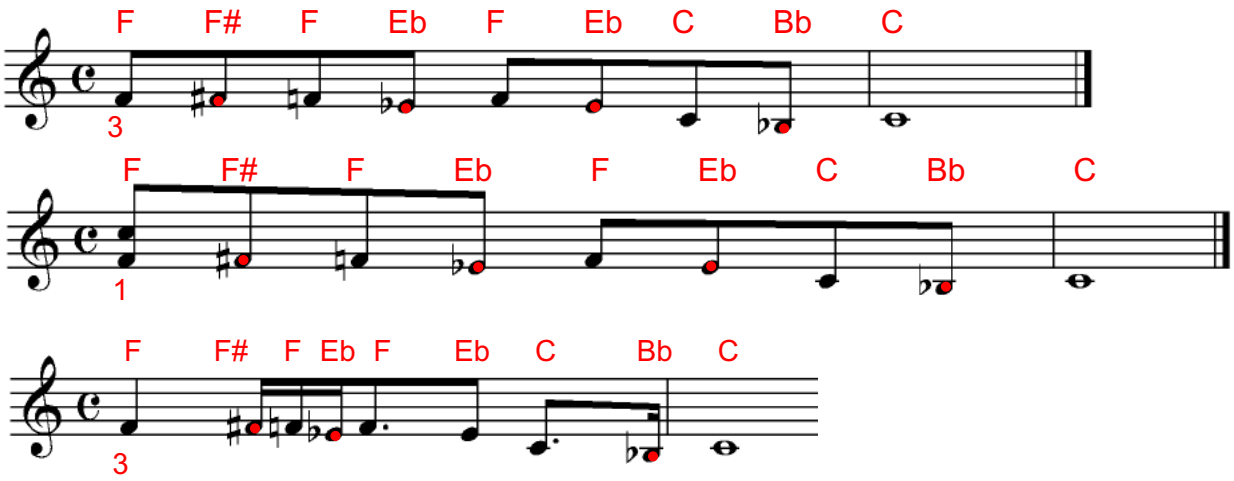


This sounds similar but stretches the sound out. Variety is good
Notice that the sharp # in front of the first F makes them ALL sharp in that bar.

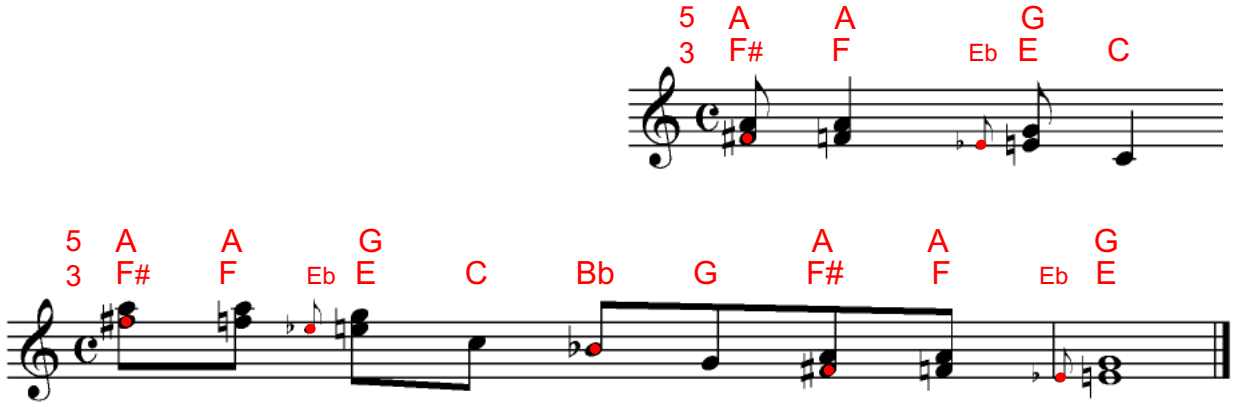


I call this the ‘Bonnie & Clyde’ Riff. It always reminds me of the song.

MORE RIFFS TO PRACTICE WITH
(from book 6)

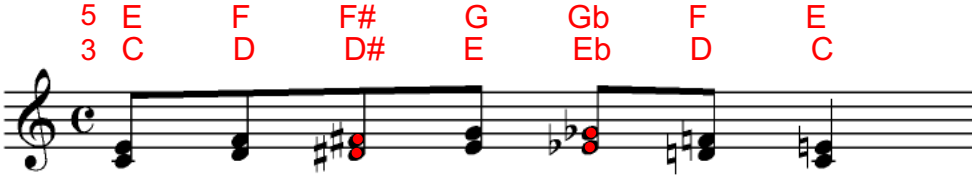
The following 3 patterns are nearly the same. The second riff has just got an added C note on TOP of the first note. This is a common blues trick. In the third riff the 2nd to 5th notes are played very quickly which is a riff in itself. LISTEN to the recording!



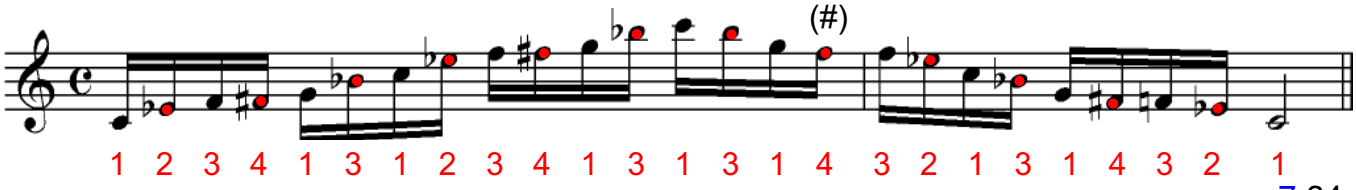
Blues riffs very often use ‘double’ notes - this gives an extra ‘ring’ and you often SLIDE on to the notes from a flat note.



You will have heard the following riff a million times. Try transposing it to F and G for better effect.



This is the BLUES SCALE over two octaves up and down.
The trick is getting the fingering right. Sounds great though doesn’t it?



RIGHT HAND RIFFS
PICK UP's, SLIDE's & TREMELO's

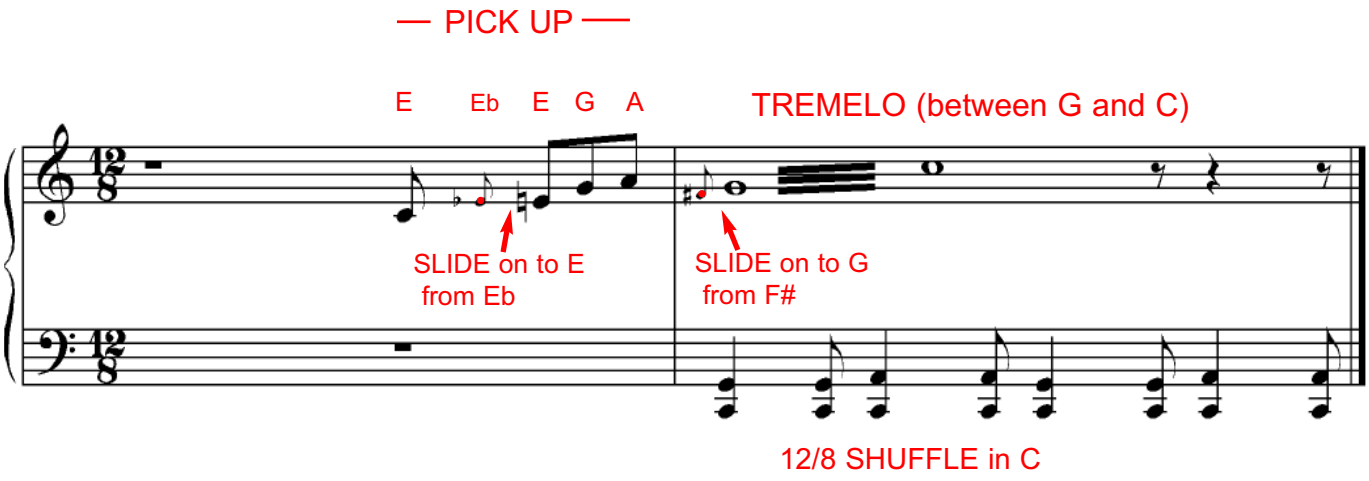
Pick Up's, Hammer On's and Tremelo's are devices that are often used in Blues.

A PICK UP is a short riff that leads into a chord or pattern.

A SLIDE is when you very quickly slide off one note onto another note.
(almost as if you've hit the first note by accident)
This is a typical BLUES device which is trying to copy the sound of a string being 'bent' on a Guitar - as often happens in the Blues

A TREMELO is when two notes are alternated many times at high speed giving a vibrating sound. Listen to the sound clip.

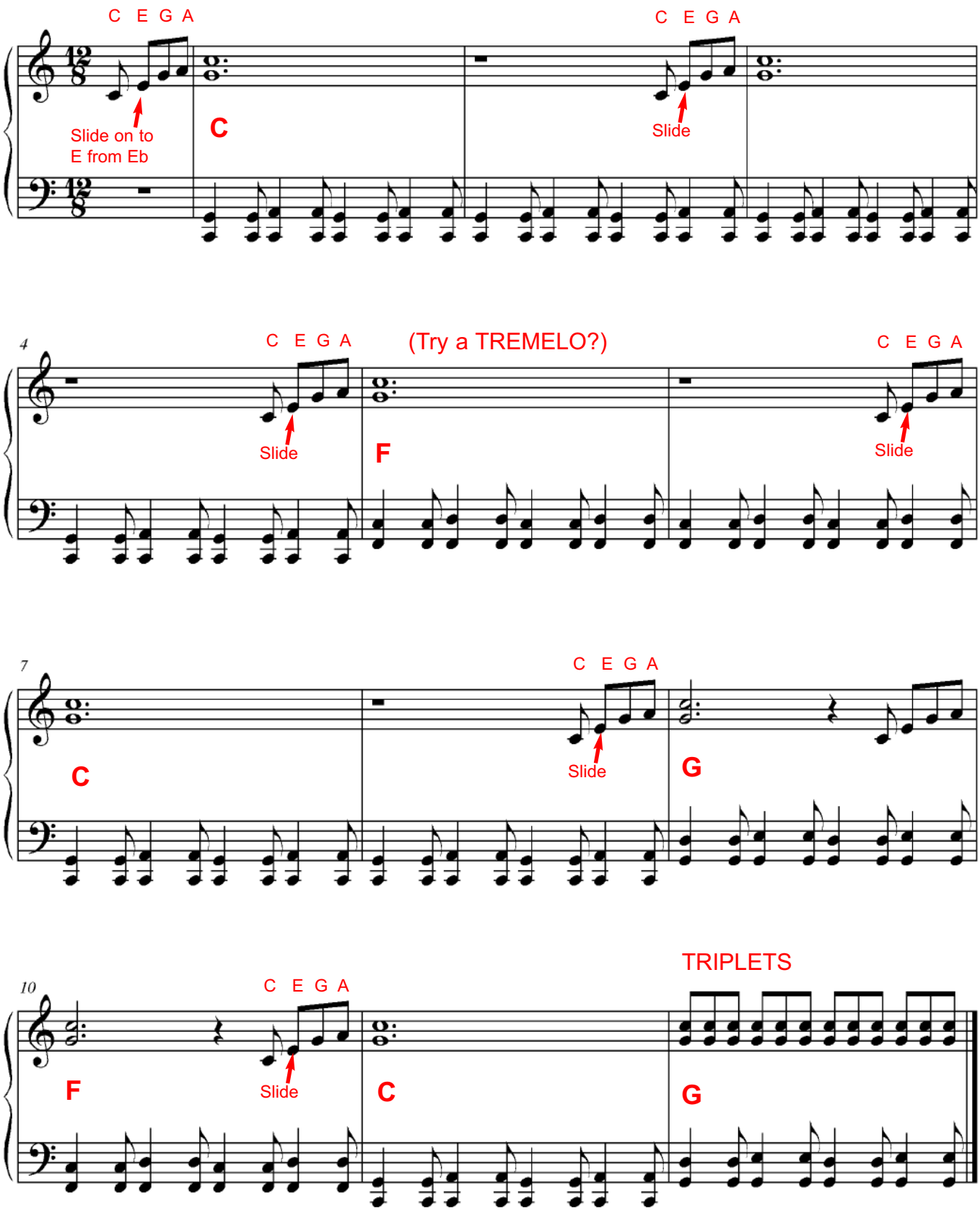
Try the following two bars that use all three devices.

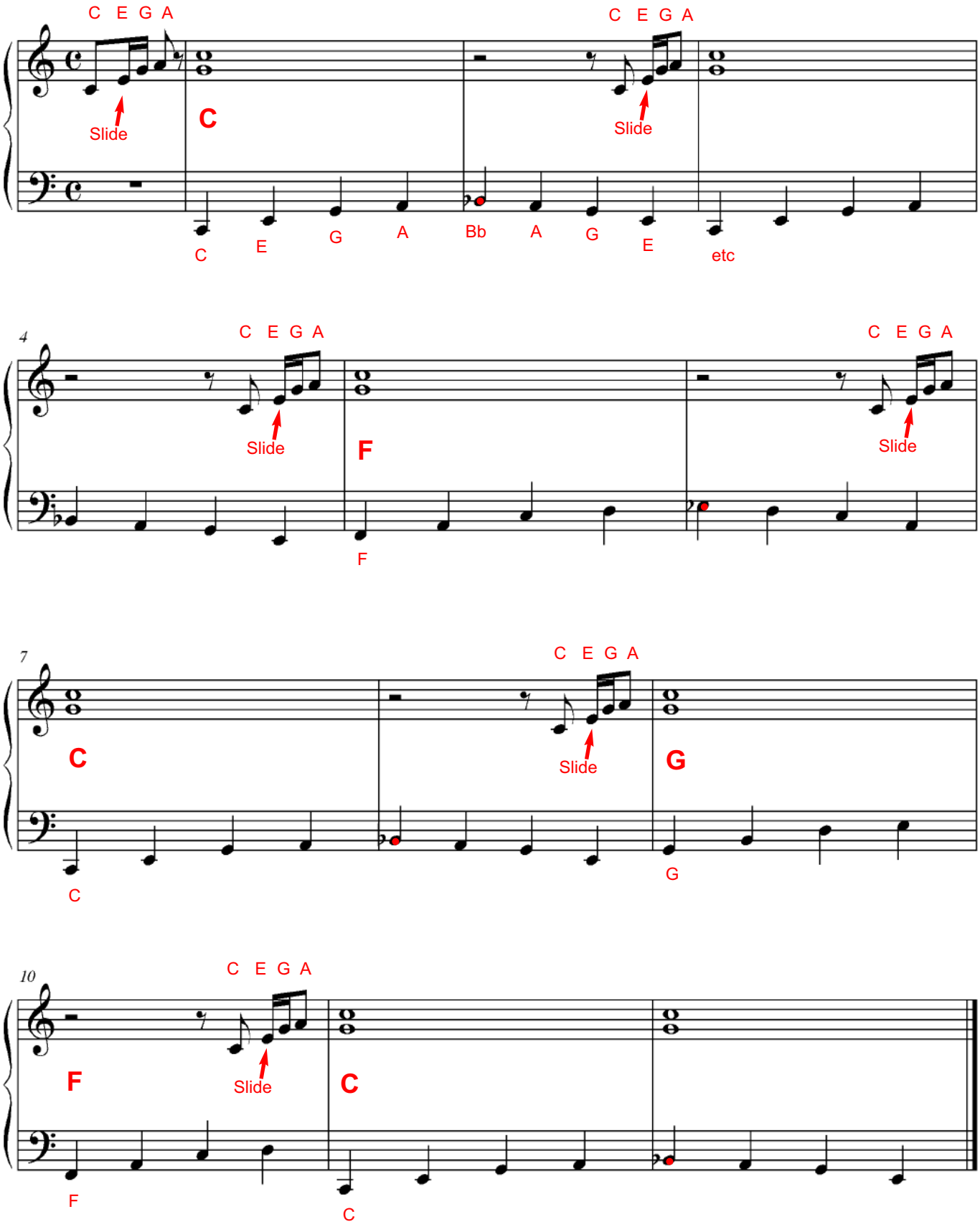


In the following practice pieces I haven't put in any TREMELO's but you can try them yourself if you want to. For example in bars two, four, six etc you can either hold the G and C note for four beats or play them as a TREMELO. Experiment!

I also haven't written in all the notes for the HAMMER ON because there wasn't much room - I have written 'hammer on from Eb' underneath instead.

SLIDE SHUFFLE

12/8 SHUFFLE (Left Hand)

SLIDE ON BOOGIE

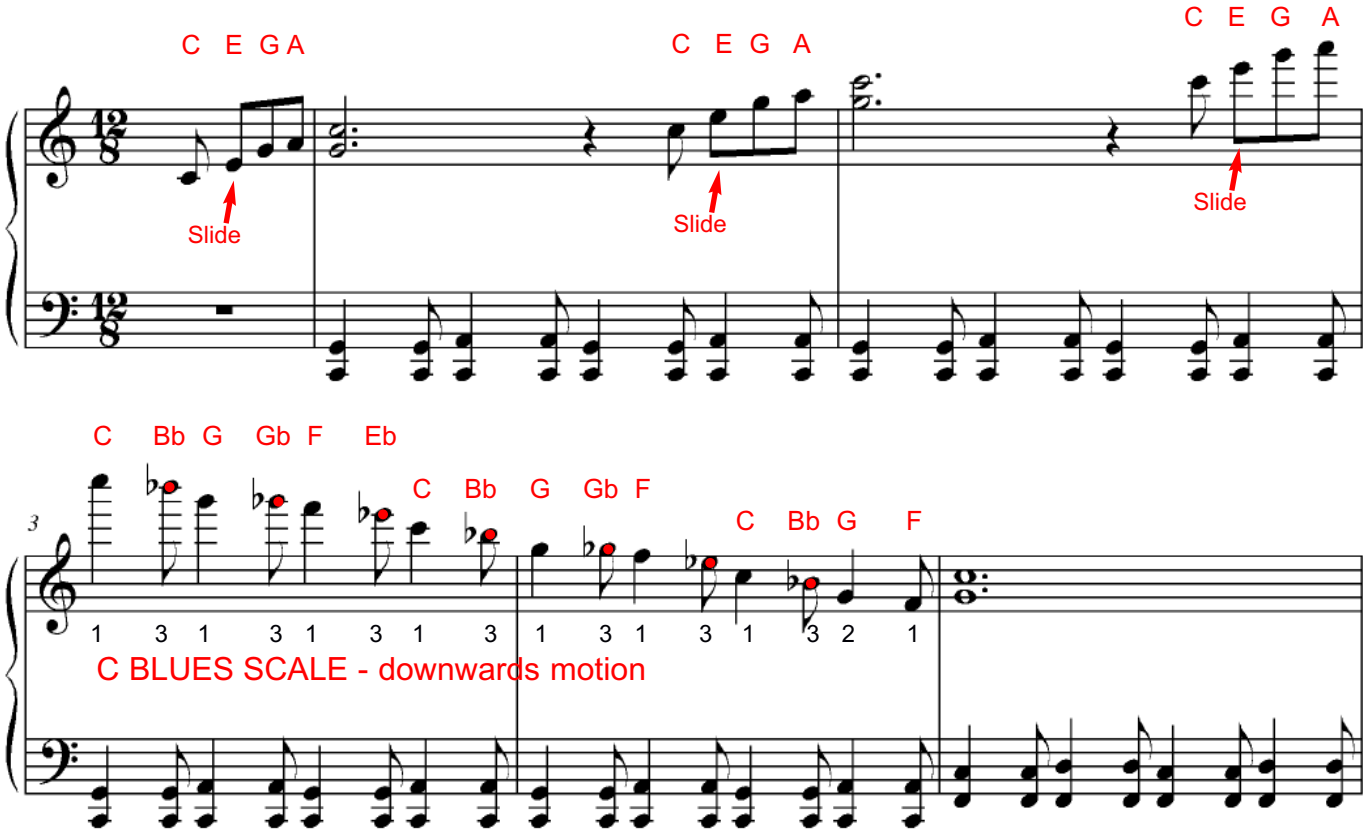
STRAIGHT EIGHT BOOGIE (Left Hand)

USING THE OCTAVES

12/8 SHUFFLE (Left Hand)

The great thing about piano is you can clearly see all the octaves. They all look exactly the same! So if you learn a riff in one octave you can EASILY move it up or down the piano to another octave. Even better is when you can LINK two or three duplicate riffs together to take you up the piano and then use another riff or run to bring you all the way down again.

Try the following exercise and then introduce it into your 12 bar blues.

Three PICK-UP's and a BLUES SCALE run



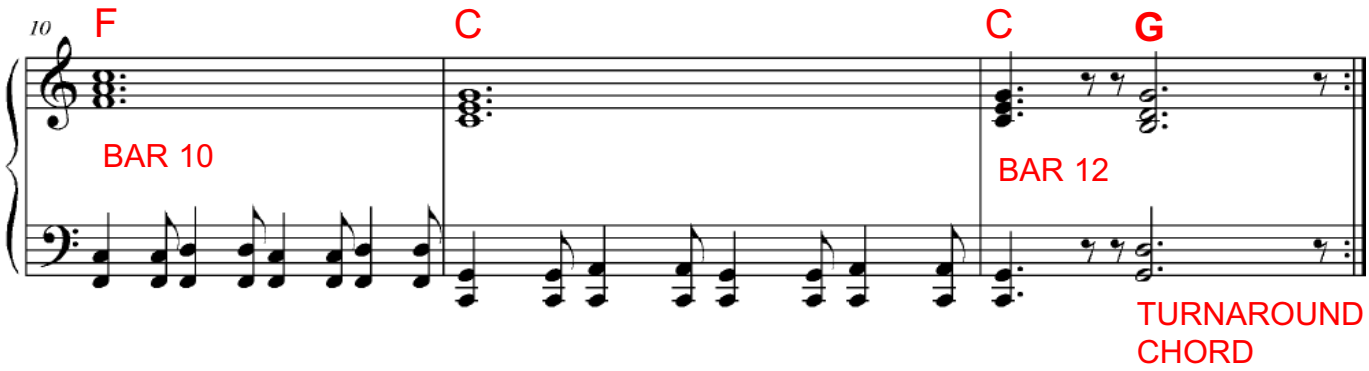
ADVANCED BLUES PIANO
TURNAROUNDS

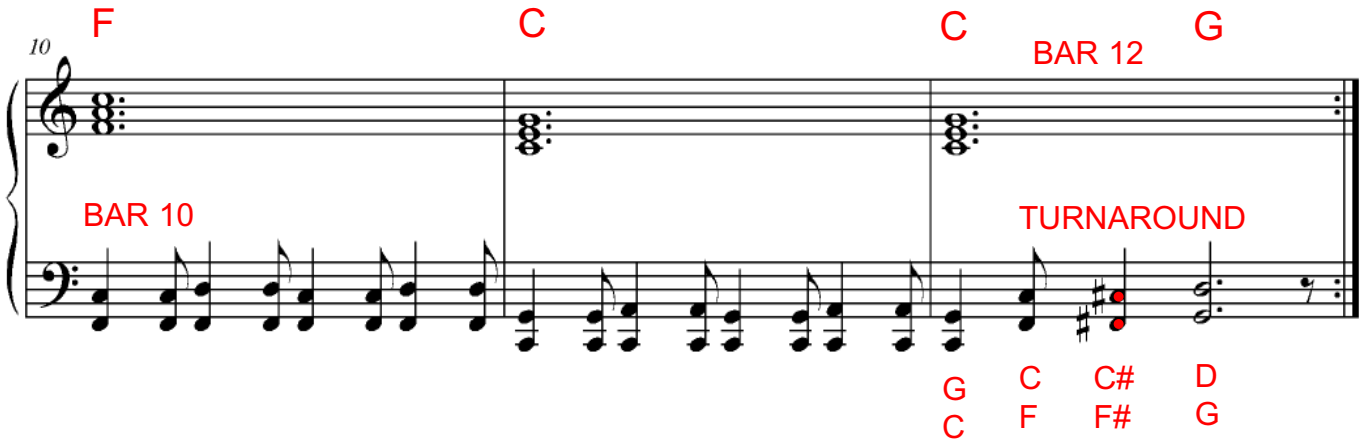
Blues tunes are normally made up of a repeated sequence of 12 chords.

When you get to the 12th bar there is usually a device called a ‘turnaround’ which is basically a chord, lick or pattern that gives you a strong ‘audible’ desire to return to the beginning and start again. This drives the tune forward and gives the listener a sense of involvement in the tune.

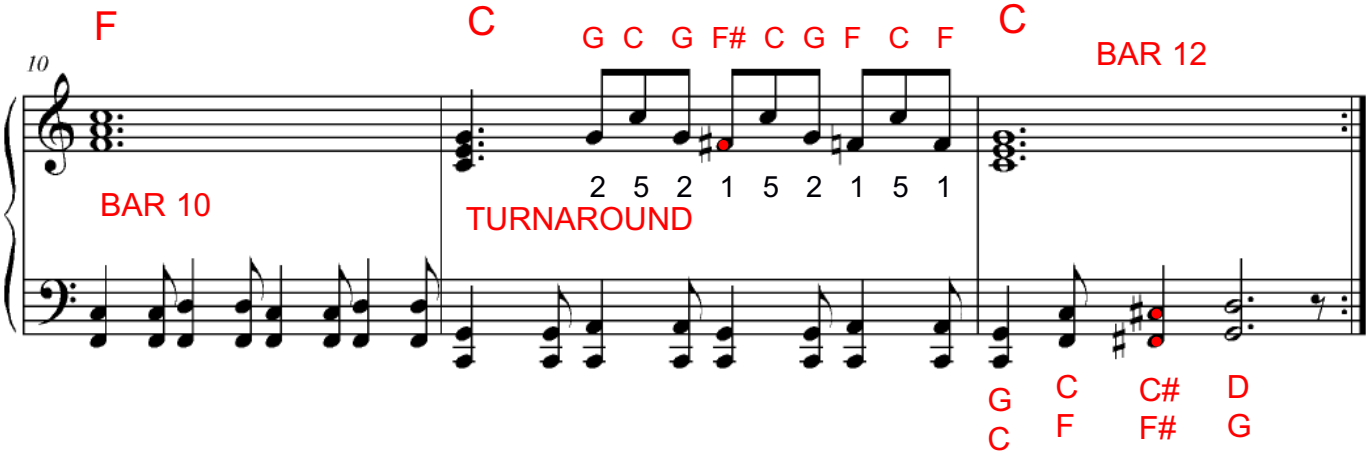
Try the examples on the following page for Blues in the key of C and then try to add them into your playing.

ADVANCED BLUES PIANO
TURNAROUNDS
(In the key of C)

BASIC TURNAROUND

LEFT HAND TURNAROUND



TWO HANDS TURNAROUND



ADVANCED BLUES PIANO
BLUES IN THE KEY OF G

TRANSPOSE - TRANSPOSE - TRANSPOSE

So far, we've looked at Blues in the key of C.

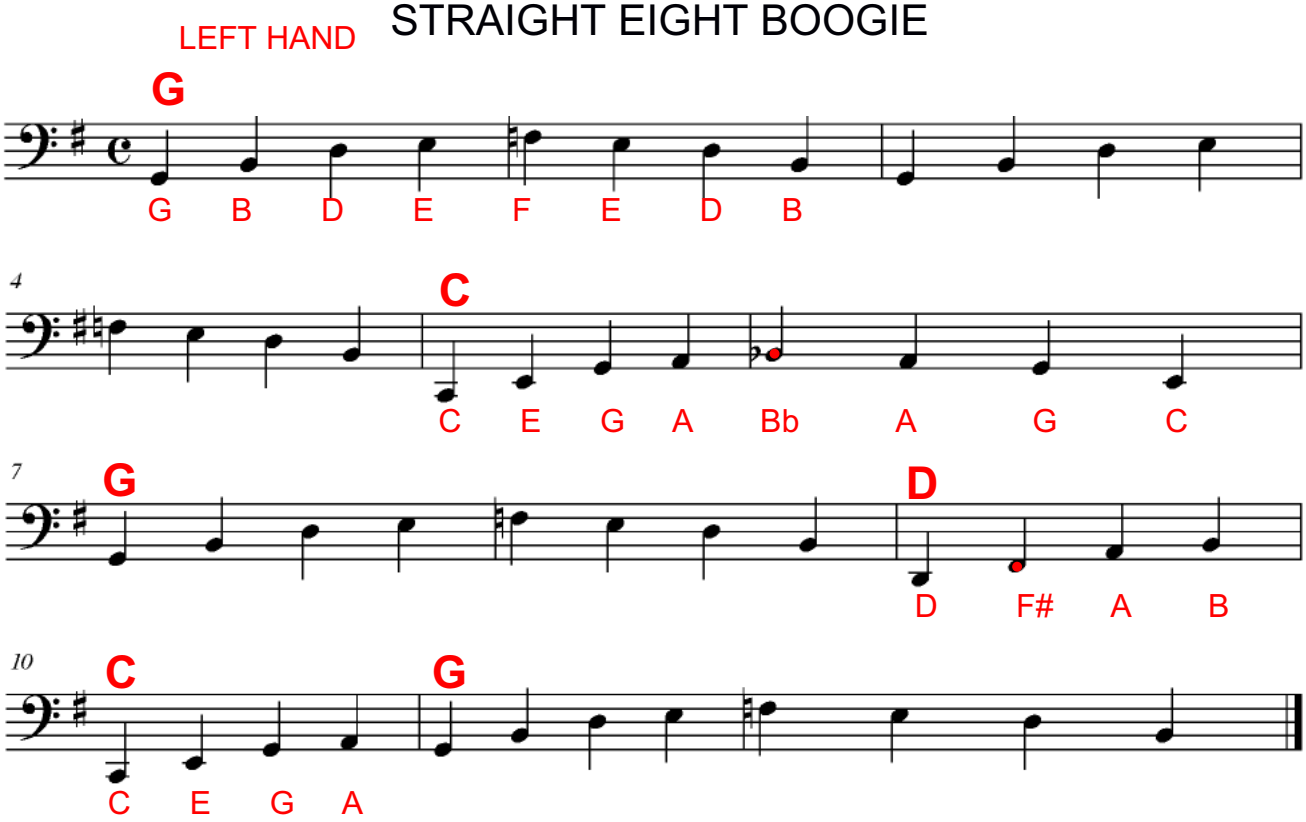
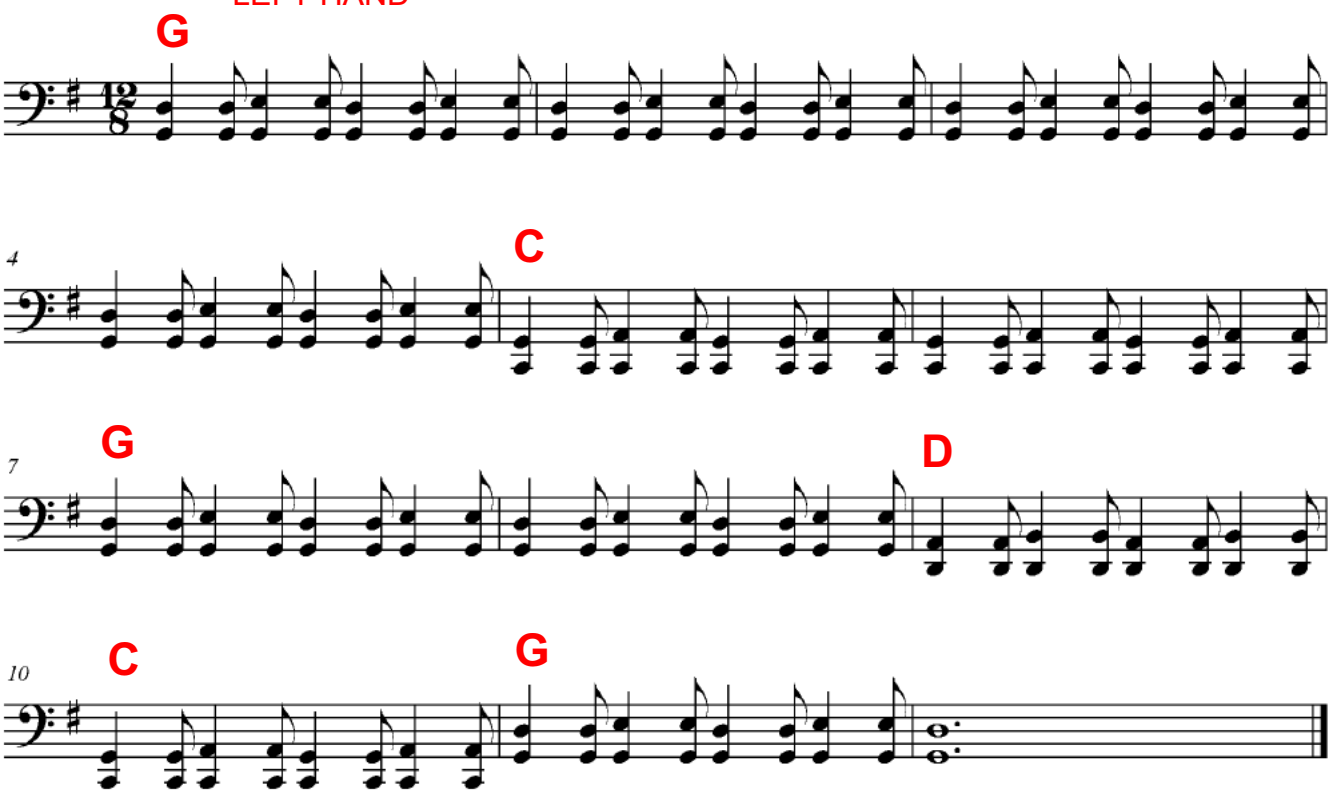
It's GREAT practice to TRANSPOSE all the exercises into as many different keys as possible - particularly F, G, and Bb

If a Blues tune in the key of C doesn't fit your vocal range then the next easiest key to try is G.

Over the next few pages I will give you some guidelines for the key of G but it's even better practice if you can transpose everything you have learned so far into the key of G by figuring it out for yourself

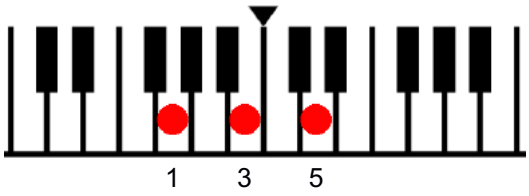
SEE VIDEO page 41

ADVANCED BLUES PIANO
LEFT HAND PATTERNS FOR THE KEY OF G

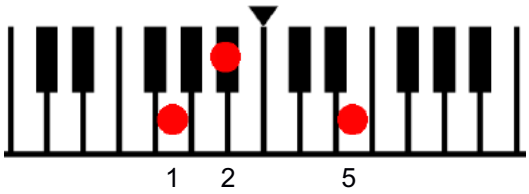
STRAIGHT EIGHT BOOGIE

12/8 SHUFFLE

ADVANCED BLUES PIANO

RIGHT HAND CHORDS FOR THE KEY OF G

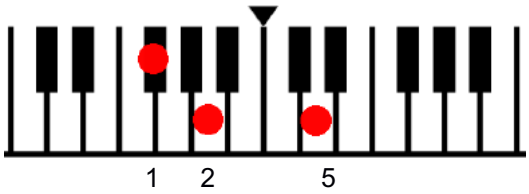
BASIC CHORDS



G

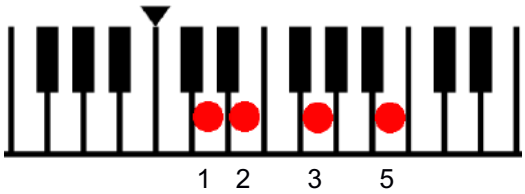


C7 (Middle - no root)

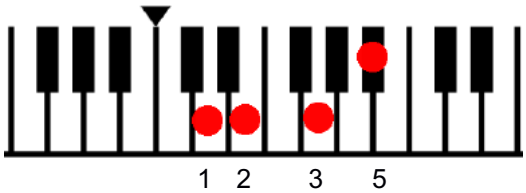


D7 (backwards)

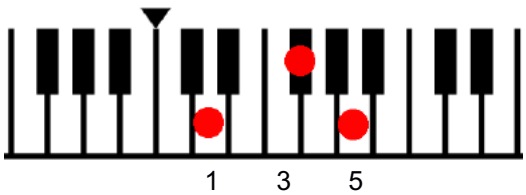
ADVANCED CHORDS



G6 (middle)



C79 (no root)



D

ADVANCED BLUES PIANO
THE G BLUES SCALE (RIGHT HAND)

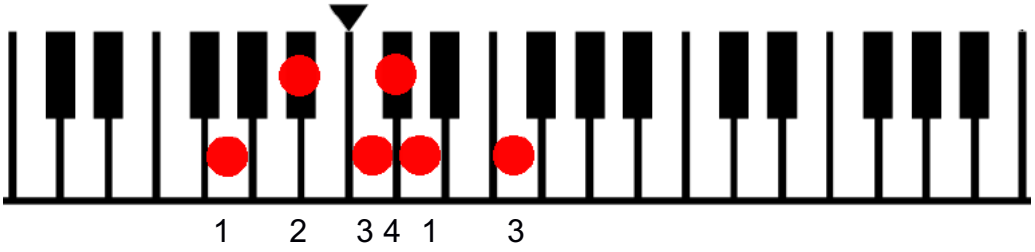
Remember how to construct a BLUES SCALE

Use the 4 notes of the MINOR SEVENTH (In Gm7 they are G - Bb - D - F)

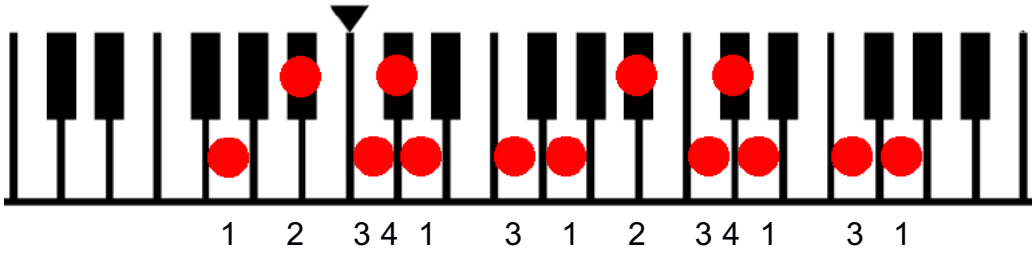
And add the 4th and the flattened 5th (In G these are C - Db)

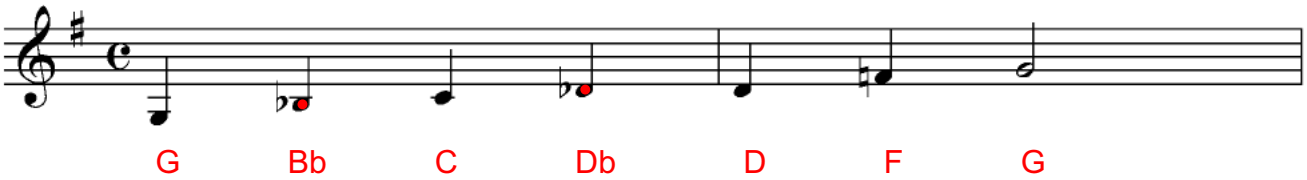
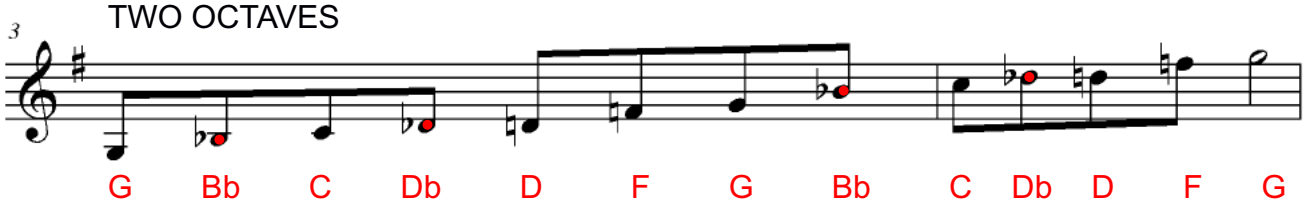
THE G BLUES SCALE

ONE OCTAVE



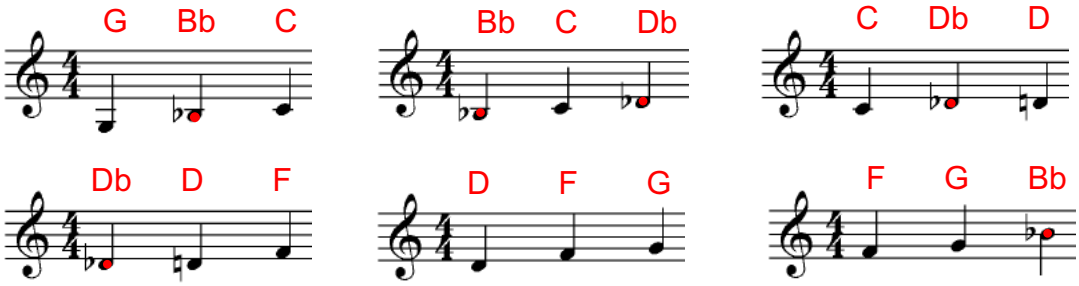
TWO OCTAVES

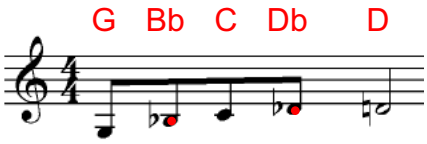
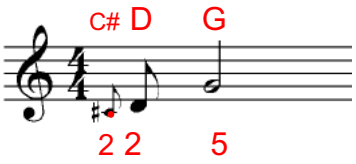


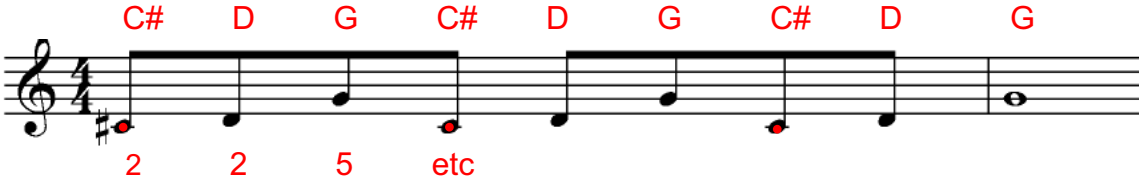
ONE OCTAVE

TWO OCTAVES

G BLUES SCALE RIFFS TO PRACTICE WITH

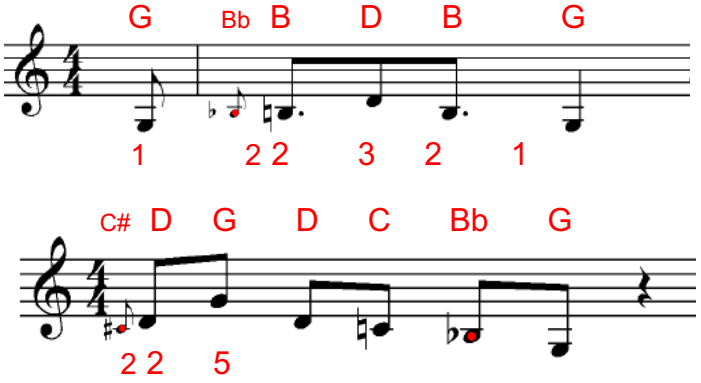
(Practice these higher up the keys as well)

These three note patterns are taken from the BLUES SCALE - experiment with them



This is a five finger position for the scale

This is called a ‘SLIDE’ - very often you *slide* onto the white key from the flat of the key

This sounds similar but stretches the sound out. Variety is good
Notice that the sharp # in front of the first C makes them ALL sharp in that bar.



I call this the ‘Bonnie & Clyde’ Riff. It always reminds me of the song.

G BLUES SCALE RIFFS TO PRACTICE WITH

(Practice these higher up the keys as well)

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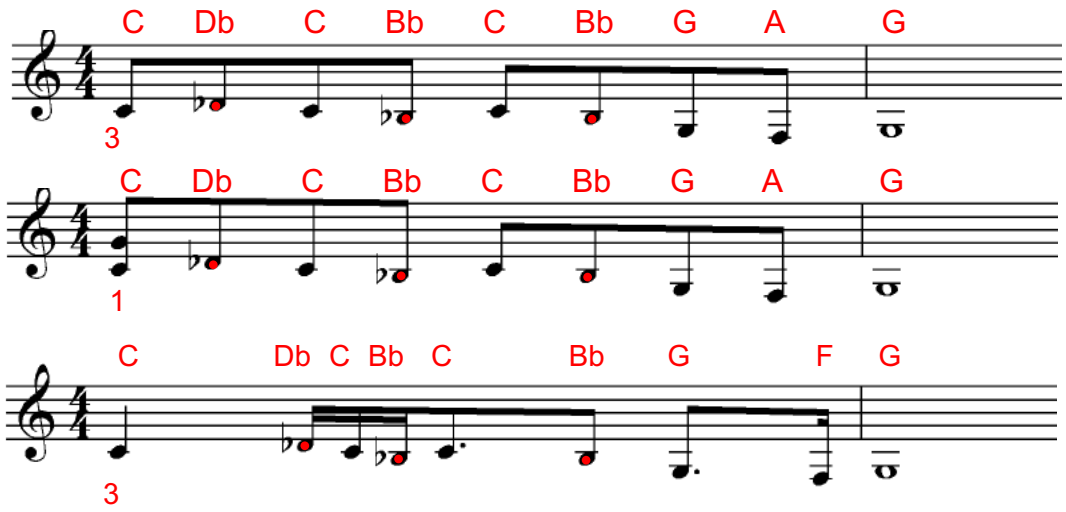

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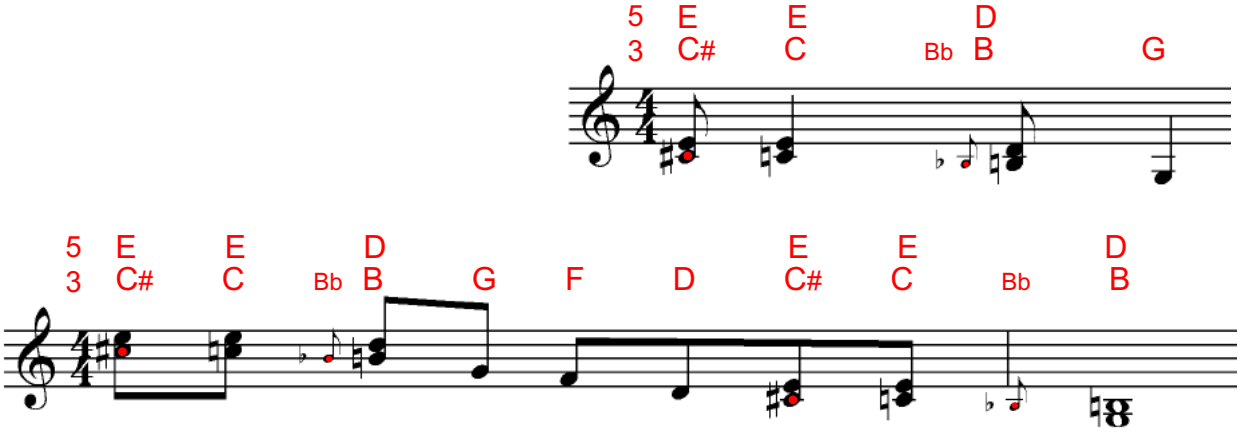
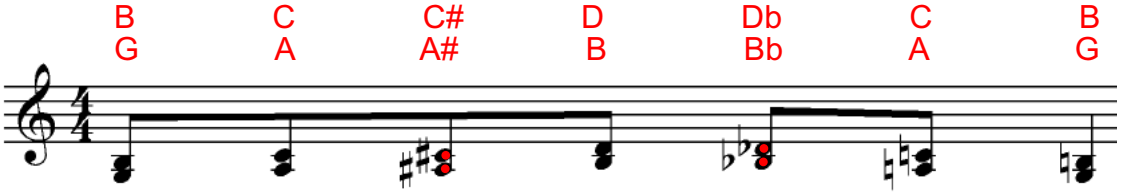
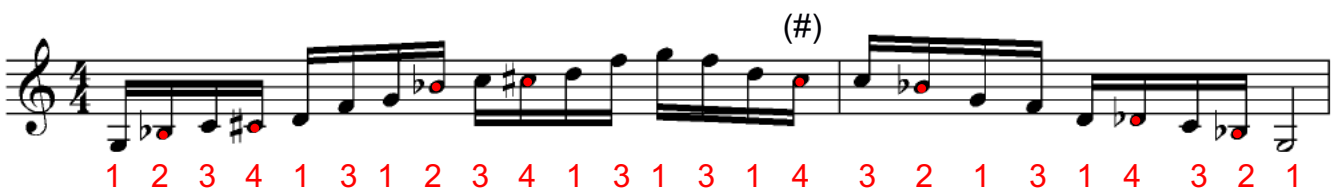
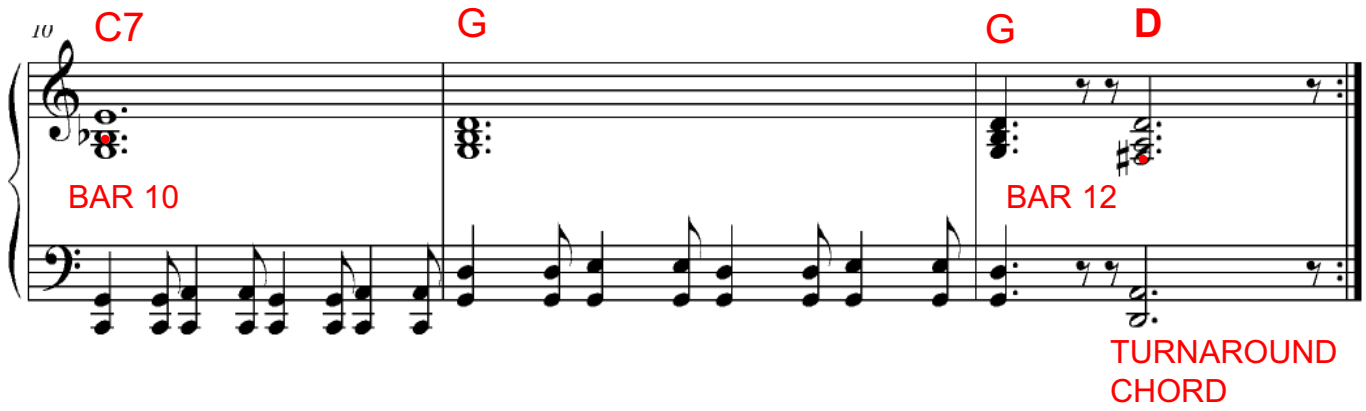


You will have heard the following riff a million times. Try transposing it to C and D for better effect.

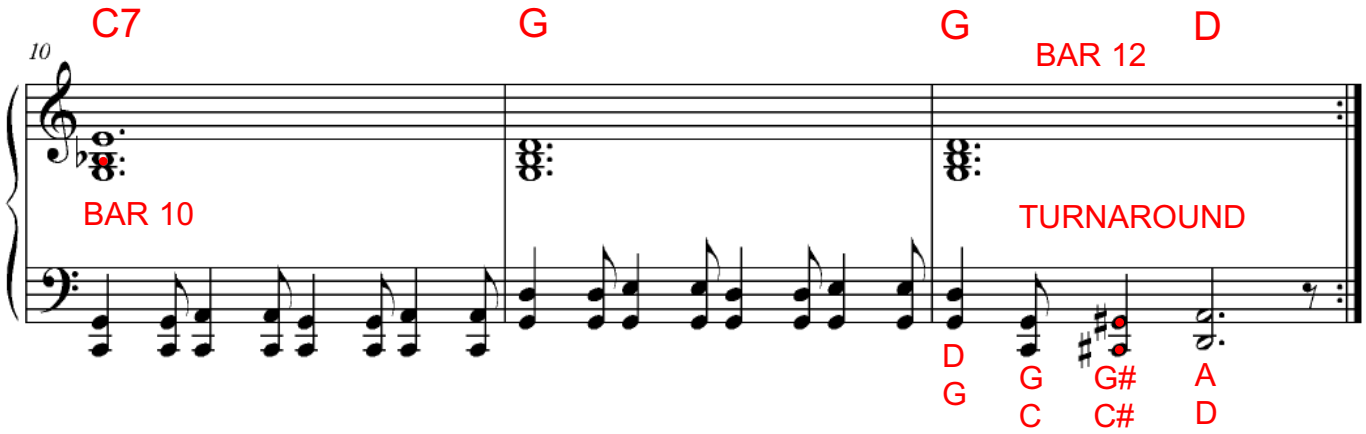


This is the BLUES SCALE over two octaves up and down.
The trick is getting the fingering right. Sounds great though doesn’t it?

ADVANCED BLUES PIANO
TURNAROUNDS
(In the key of G)

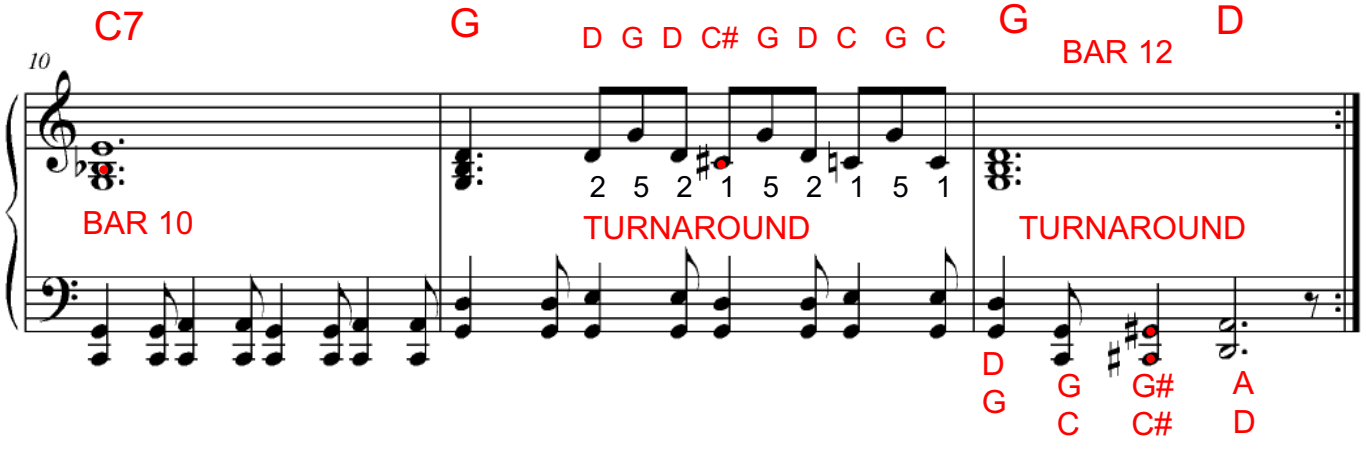
BASIC TURNAROUND



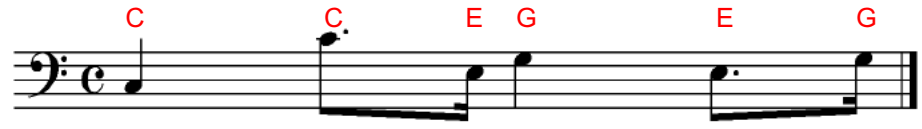
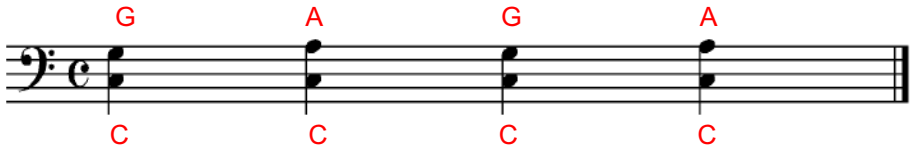
LEFT HAND TURNAROUND



TWO HANDS TURNAROUND



EXTRA LEFT HAND RHYTHMS
(one bar in the key of C - Transpose to all keys)

NEW ORLEANS (Like Blueberry Hill Rhythm with an added C note on top)

BARRELHOUSE

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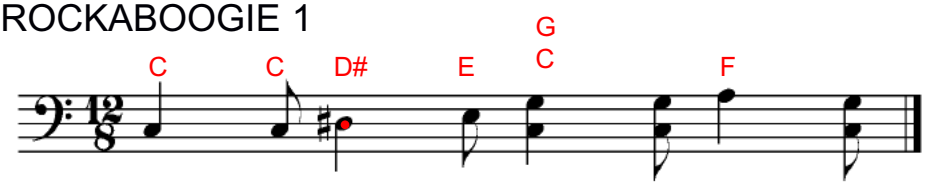
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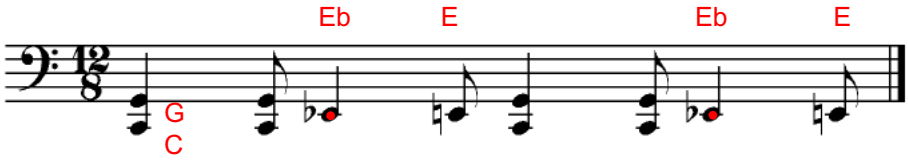
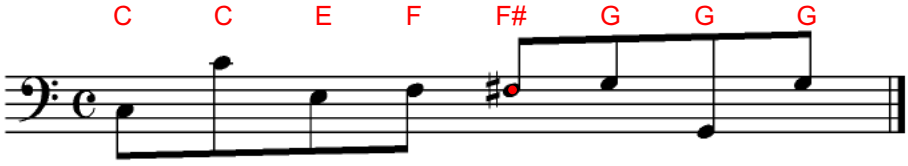
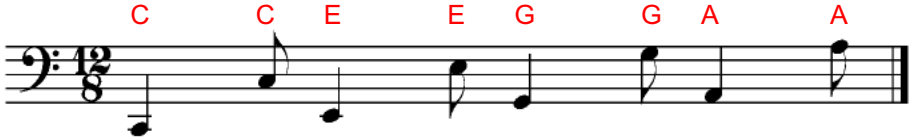

BOOGIE WOOGIE



BROKEN OCTAVES

ADVANCED BLUES PIANO
TAKING IT FURTHER

Hopefully, you will now have a feeling for playing Blues Piano.

Obviously there is an infinite amount left to learn.

Keep transposing all you have learned into as many other keys as possible.

Buy more books on Blues Piano - listen to CD's - pick out the ryhthms and the riffs.

Start adding all the various elements together - have fun - experiment - make mistakes - sing along - practice, practice, practice.

I hope you enjoyed the journey!

FAKE STRIDE

& The Entertainer

FAKE STRIDE

part 1 - ‘real’ stride

I’m sure you’ve seen a seasoned pianist playing stride piano. His or her left hand going smoothly from a low bass note up to a chord back down to a note up to a chord and so on. Looks easy but is actually very difficult.

The process for a ‘real’ stride is as follows

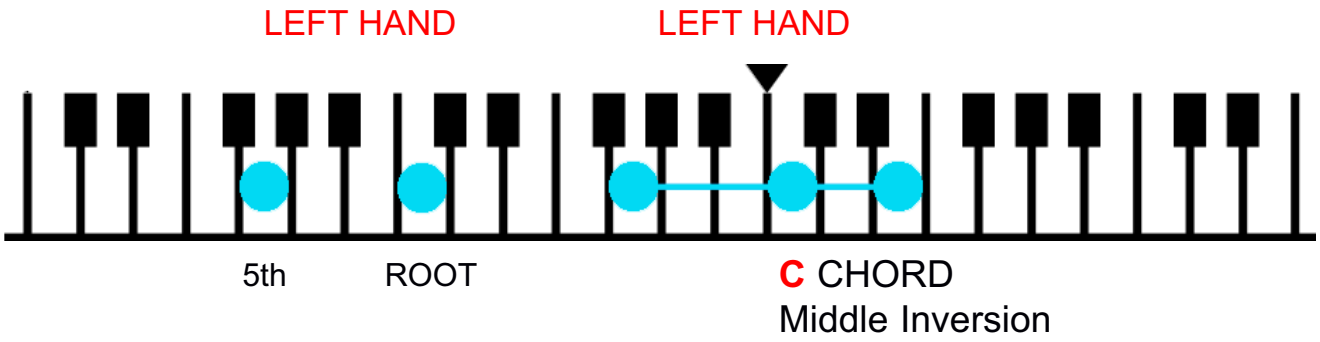
The ROOT note of the chord is played on beat ONE

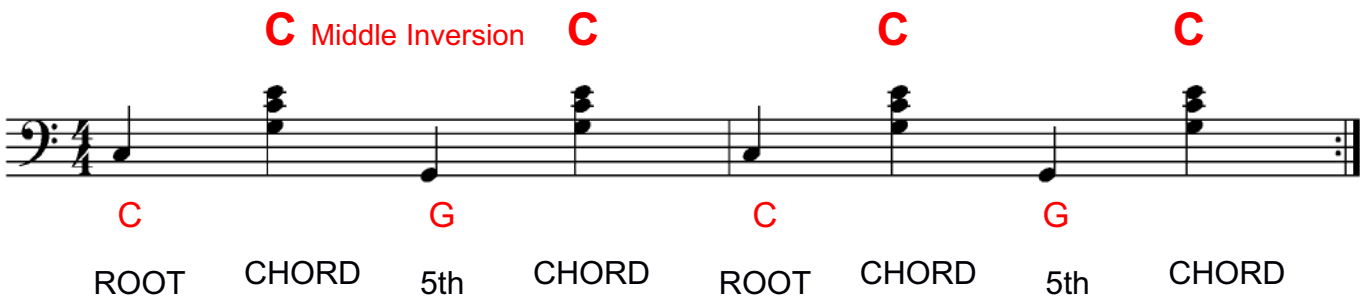
The CHORD is played on beat TWO - higher up the keyboard

The 5th (below the ROOT) is played on beat THREE

The CHORD is played again on beat FOUR

Let’s see how it might work with the **chord of C** - first find the notes

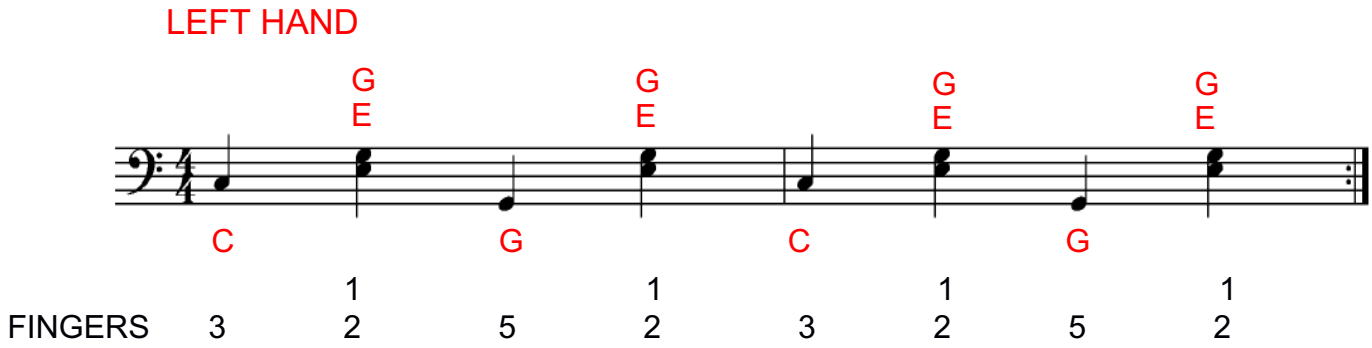




FAKE STRIDE
part 2

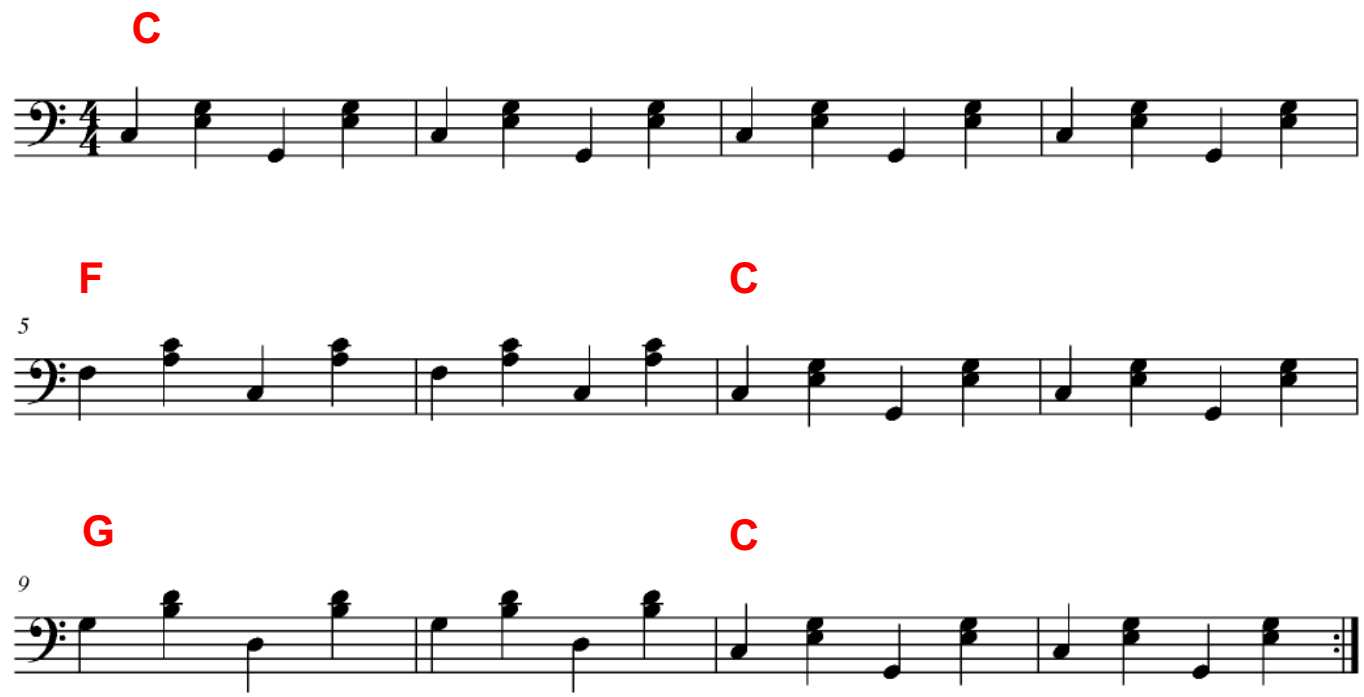
'FAKE' stride produces a similar sound to 'real' stride but is much easier to perform. In fake stride the object is to keep the bass notes and chord notes in closer proximity so that your left hand doesn't have too far to travel.

Try this example for the **chord of C**



Can you see that the single bass notes are basically the same rhythm you played in the Oom Pah rhythm and the 1st and 2no beats of the bar are a SPLIT CHORD

Transpose the rhythm to the chords of F and G and try the following chord progression - LEFT HAND ONLY

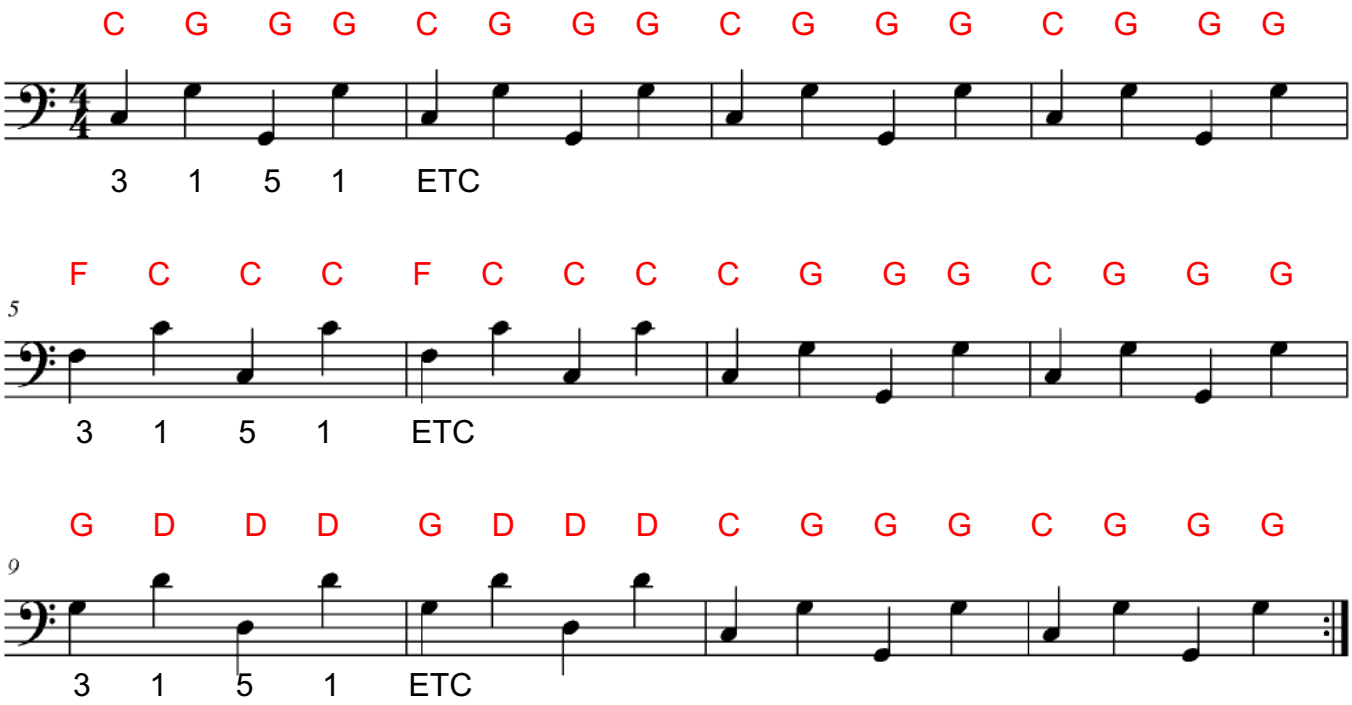


FAKE STRIDE
part 3

LET'S MAKE IT EVEN EASIER

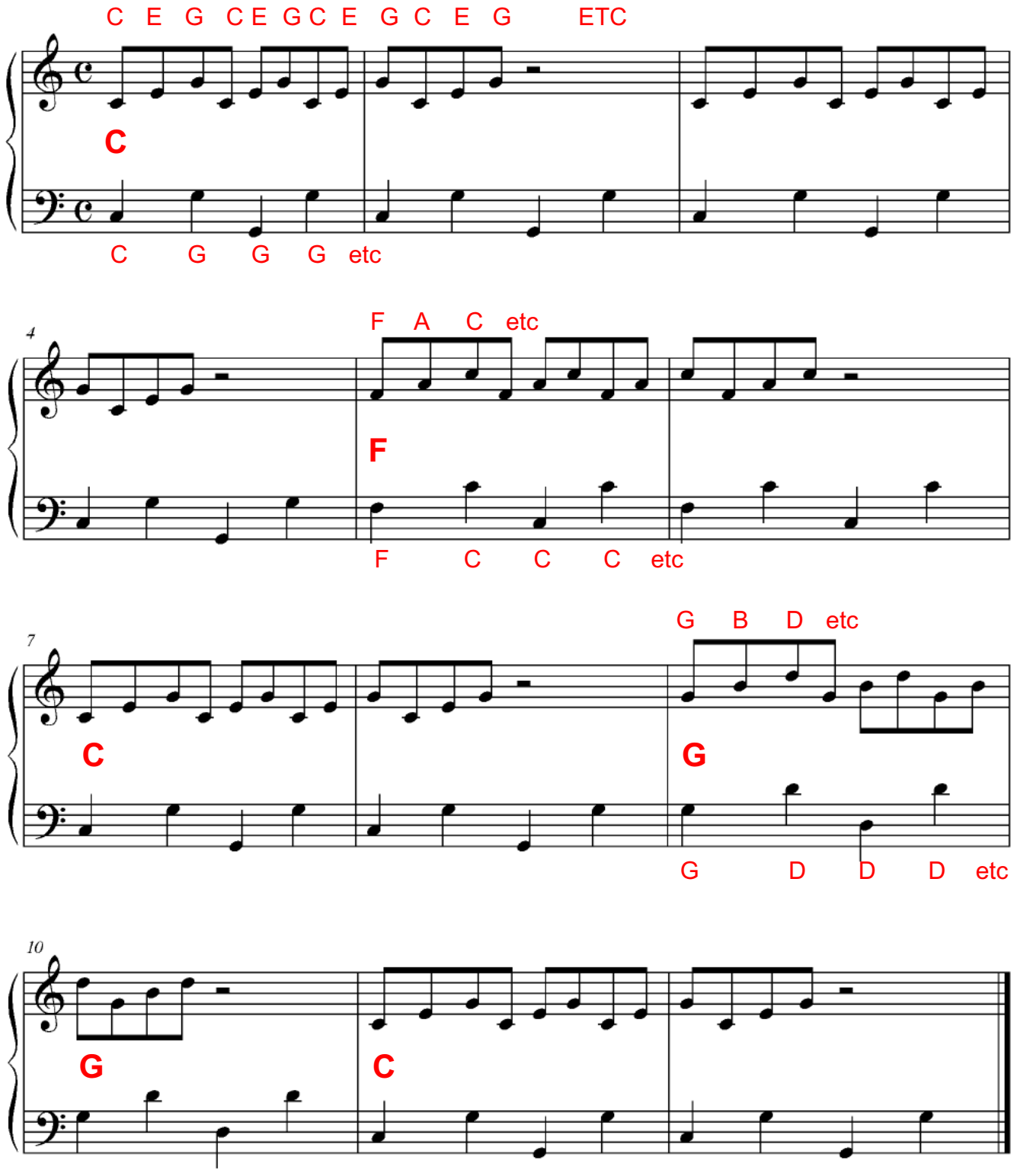
Even the fake stride can be difficult to begin with (and tiring on the muscles)
To help your practise you can take out one of the CHORD notes (the 3rd). This will help you get used to the movement of the notes without over-complicating things.

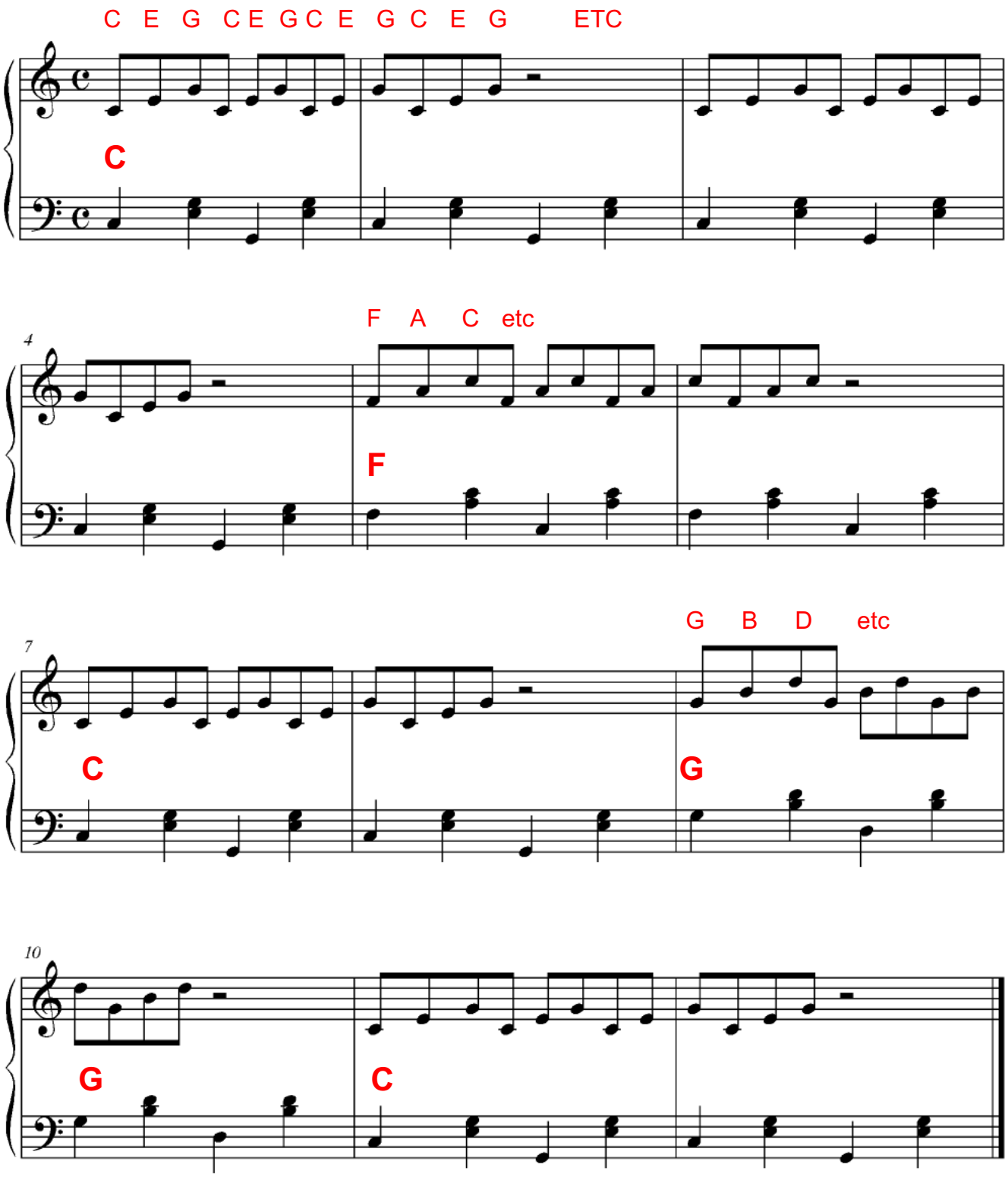
Try the progression again and notice the missing notes. Much easier!



Now let's introduce an easy RIGHT HAND pattern.
Listen carefully to the recording. It may look complicated but you will play it intuitively in no time at all.

FAKE STRIDE
part 4

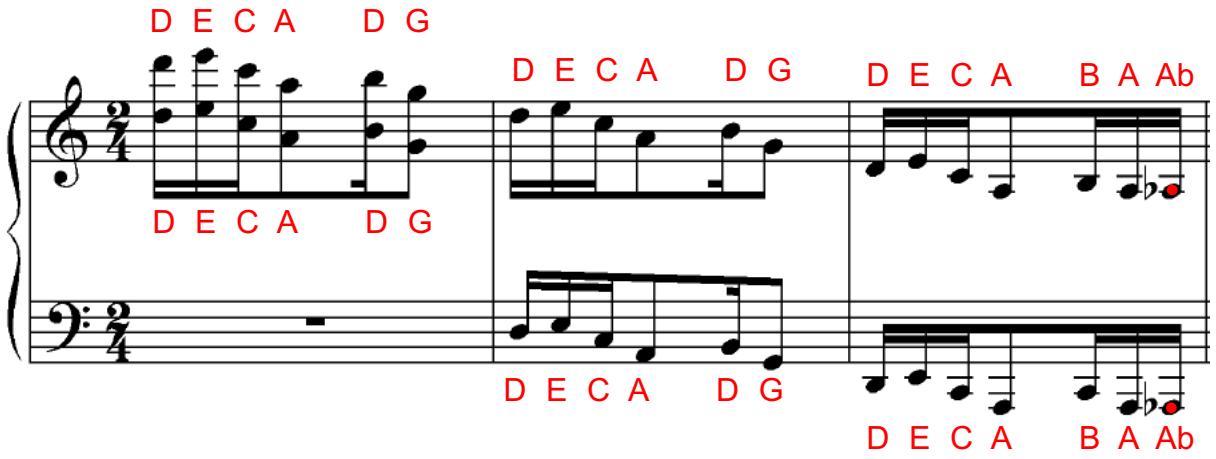
RAGTIME RIFF (no left hand 3rd)

FAKE STRIDE
part 5

RAGTIME RIFF (with left hand 3rd)

The song you've been waiting for
THE ENTERTAINER
by Scott Joplin

Now it's time to try the first part of the all-time classic Ragtime song - The Entertainer - made famous in recent times in the film The Sting.

We're going to play it using the Fake Stride so it won't be too difficult. There are a few extra things to look out for.

The classic three bar opening is played using OCTAVES. This is actually easy if you just LOCK your hand and concentrate on ONE finger. Look at the 3 bar pattern carefully and you'll see it is just ONE pattern repeated over three octaves. (same notes - but 8 notes to the left) See if you can memorize it.



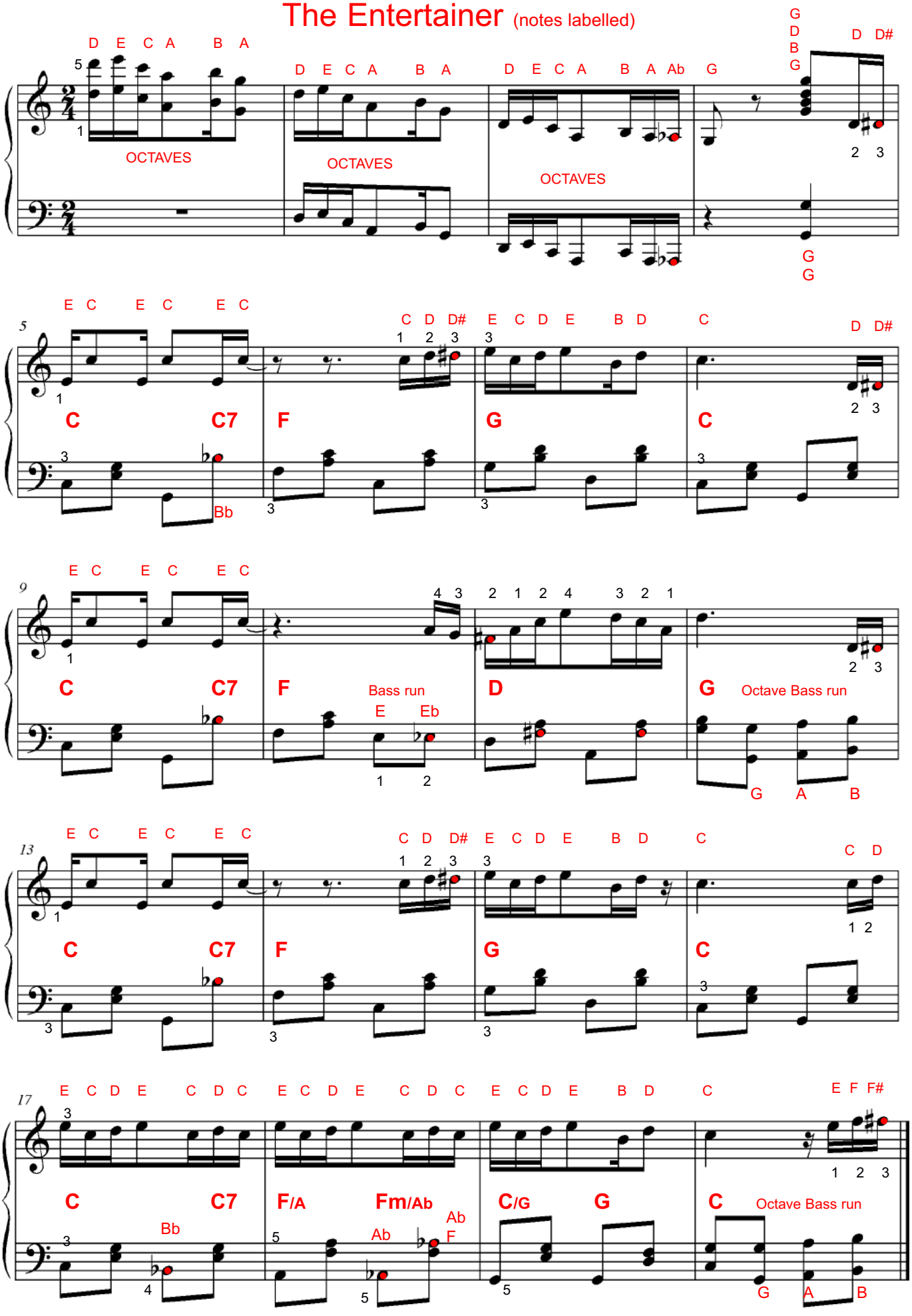
Look out for BASS RUNS either single note (bar 10) or Octave notes (bar 12)

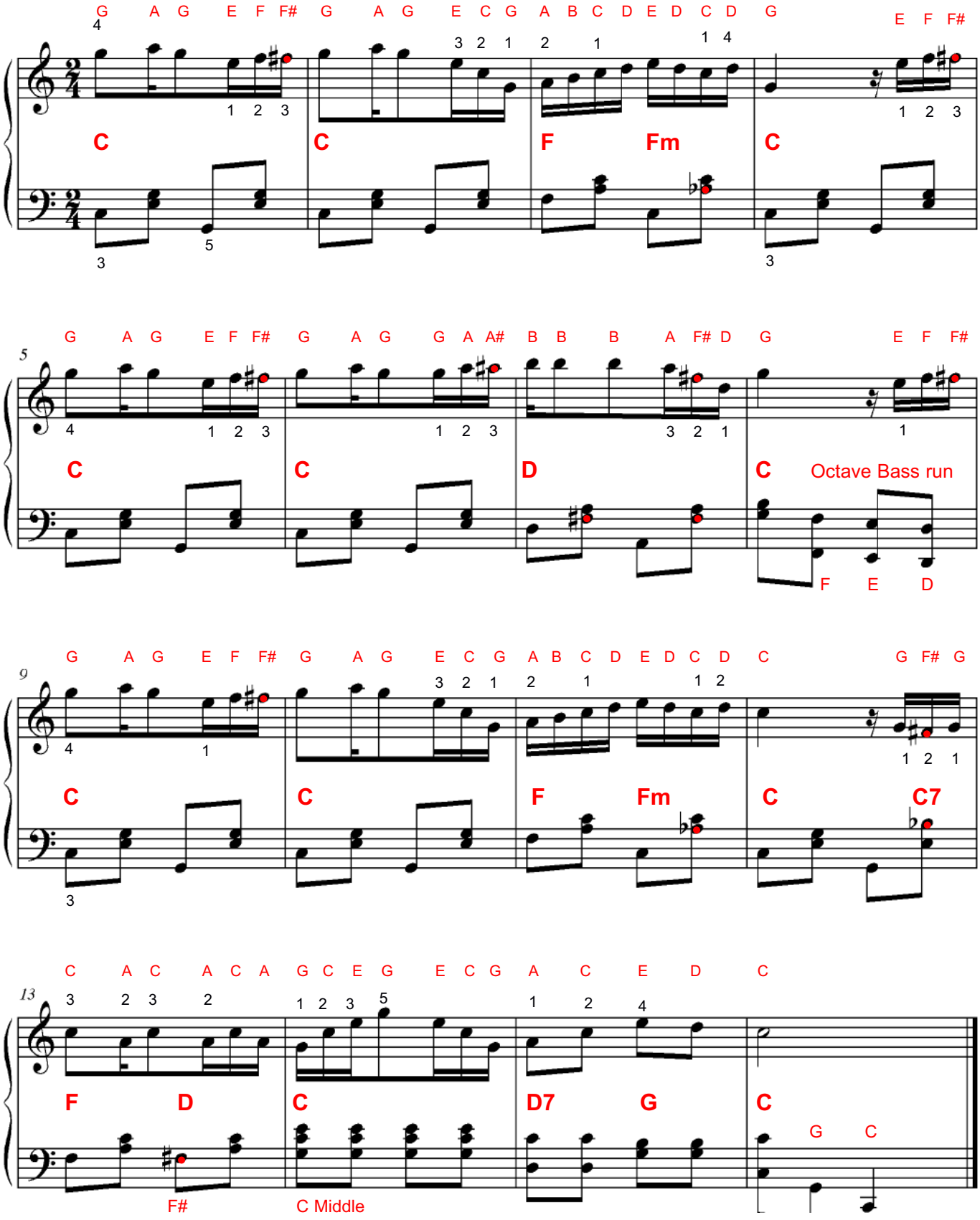
There are two versions of the piece. The second one adds in some SIXTHS to fill out the Right hand melody (Bars 6-7, 14-15, 17-19)

You played SIXTHS in book 5 when improvising in the key of Am (Snowman)

This piece needs a LOT of practice but it's worth it. Have fun!

SCOTT JOPLIN

The Entertainer (notes labelled)

D E C A B A
OCTAVES
D E C A B A
OCTAVES
D E C A B A Ab G
OCTAVES
G D B G
D D#
G G
E C E C E C
C D D# E C D E B D C
C C7 F G C
Bb
D D#
E C E C E C
4 3 2 1 2 4 3 2 1
C C7 F Bass run E Eb D G Octave Bass run
G A B
C D
E C E C E C
C D D# E C D E B D C
C C7 F G C
E C D E C D C E C D E C D C E C D E B D C
E F F#
C C7 F/A Fm/Ab C/G G C Octave Bass run
Bb Ab Ab F
G A B

SCOTT JOPLIN
The Entertainer

YOU CAN NOW
TRY SECTION 8